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PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,

AND CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE

VOLUME FOURTH.

GLASGOW:

WILLIAM COLLINS, INGRAM STREET;

HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO. LONDON.

ON THE

MIRACULOUS AND INTERNAL

EVIDENCES

OF THE

CHRISTIAN REVELATION,

AND THE

AUTHORITY OF ITS RECORDS.

BY

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D. & LL.D.

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CONTENTS.

BOOK III.

ON THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

PAGE

CHAP. I. On the Consistency of Scripture with itself and with Contemporary Authorship, ... 7

II. On the Moral Evidence for the Truth of the New Testament, ... 48

III. On the Experimental Evidence for the Truth of Christianity, ... 91

IV. On the portable Character of the Evidence for the Truth of Christianity, ... 169

BOOK IV.

ON THE BOOKS OF THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN REVELATION, AND THE DEGREE OF AUTHORITY WHICH BELONGS TO THEM.

CHAP. I. On the Canon of Scripture; and, more especially, of the Old Testament, ... 213

II. On the Inspiration of the Old and New Testaments, ... 343

III. On the Internal Evidence as a Criterion for the Canon and Inspiration of Scripture, . . . 397

IV. On the Supreme Authority of Revelation, . . 432

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BOOK III.

ON THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

CHAP. I.

On the Consistency of Scripture with itself and with contemporary Authorship.

1. It is not at all times possible to obtain a precise adjustment between the actual state of things in nature, and the definitions of our own artificial philosophy. There are often certain rebellious and intractable phenomena, which do not fully and properly belong either to one division or another; and, just from the impossibility of an exact classification, we fail in our attempts, completely to accommodate our schemes of universal science to the scheme of the existent universe. The line of demarcation between cognate subjects and cognate sciences, is often obscured by things of a common or ambiguous character, which partially belong to each, but fully belong to neither. Thus, for example, there are certain anomalies which serve to obliterate somewhat the distinction between the animal and the vegetable kingdom. Thus too, there is a midway—a debateable ground between

the sciences of chemistry and natural philosophy. There are many other instances which might be specified—all serving to show that it is not by an immediate transition that we pass from one branch of philosophy to another. There is what painters would call a shading off between them. They do not pass *instanter* into each other by lines, the mathematical definition of which is length without breadth. But they melt into each other by stripes or margins of separation, across which intermediate boundary, the colour or character of the one region gradually dies away, till it fully emerges into the distinct colour and character of the other region.

2. What has suggested these observations is, that, in attempting to distinguish the internal from the external evidences of Christianity, we perceive the same sort of hazy undefined border between them, that there is between so many of the other contiguous provinces of human thought. The two kinds of evidence, in fact, run very much into each other. If it be meant of the external evidences for the truth of the Bible, that they are such as are gathered from places without the book, and of the internal that they are gathered from places within the book, it will be found of its largest and strongest evidence, that it comes not properly or fully under either the one head or the other. We scarcely know of any evidence purely external, but that which lies in the testimonies of writers not scriptural, to the existence and the authority and the early date and the reputed writers of scripture. And we scarcely know of any evidence purely internal, but that which is founded on the consistency

of scripture with itself, on the characteristics of honesty which may be more or less obviously discerned in it, and perhaps on the pure and right morality whether of its sentiments or precepts. It will be found of most other evidence that, instead of being drawn exclusively from either that which is without or that which is within the Bible, it is in fact elicited by the comparison of the one with the other. In estimating the force of the argument, for example, founded on the references of the early fathers to scripture, and even on their testimonies to the miracles which are recorded there, there is the comparison of that which is said out of the Bible, with that which is said in it; and the mind must have respect to the contents of the book, when attending to the credentials by which they are thus verified. Again, when a credibility is founded on the accordance which there is between the Bible and history, in those numerous allusions which it makes to the state and customs and various circumstances of the age in which it was written—this too, though perhaps commonly ranking as an internal evidence, pre-supposes a comparison between that which is within and that which is without the record. Even that credibility so commonly spoken of as internal, which is drawn from the accordance of Bible statements with the felt state of man and of all his moral and spiritual necessities, rests on the comparison of the scriptural with the ex-scriptural—of that which is graven on the tablet of revelation, with that which is graven on the tablet of the human heart. The evidence too that lies in the suitable representations which

the Bible gives of the character and ways of God, requires that we should look not only to that which is in the book, but also to that which is separate from the book; to compare the notions of God which are drawn purely from revelation, with the notions which are drawn from other sources of human opinion or knowledge. Notwithstanding the current and familiar style in which we talk of external and internal evidences for the truth of revelation, as if we perfectly understood what we were saying, there is a real difficulty in tracing the precise line of demarcation between them.

3. But we are not bound to task ourselves with the labour of bringing about an adjustment between the real state of the case on the one hand, and the arbitrary names or distinctions which our predecessors may have devised in the work of investigating it. Yet, in vindication of the title which we have prefixed to this book, it will be necessary to explain in what sense the various matters discussed in it should be brought within the department of the internal evidences. They all agree in this, that they have respect to the subject-matter of the Bible; but to a great deal more regarding this subject-matter, than to the consistency of its various parts with each other. Beside this, we found an argument on the consistency of that which is within the record, with that which is external to the record—of which last, however, it is necessary that we should have the distinct and independent knowledge. There may be a perfect consistency between what the Bible tells us of angels, and what is objectively or externally true in regard to them.

But we have no independent knowledge of this order of beings, and can found no evidence therefore on this information of the Bible—to which our only access is through the pages of the Bible itself. Whenever an evidence is founded on the harmony which obtains, between the depositions of scripture respecting certain things and the actual state of these things, we must have other means by which we know of these things than scripture itself; and so the argument is made to rest on the coincidence which obtains between the statements of the Bible, and what we know of the truth of these statements from other sources. Yet one of these sources must be excepted, else we shall lose the distinction between the internal and the external evidences. The Bible announces to us its own miracles, beside furnishing us with certain traces both of its own antiquity, and of the authors by whom it was penned. Its testimony in these matters is corroborated by the testimony of other and ex-scriptural authors; and the strength of this latter testimony forms the main strength of the external evidence for the truth of the christian revelation. Let us exclude this, and there remains an internal evidence —a great part of which is grounded, like the external, on a comparison between what we learn in the Bible, and what we know apart from the Bible; yet distinguished from the external, in that the knowledge is ours through another medium than the testimony of authors, deponing historically, either to the antiquity and genuineness and reception of the Bible, or to those miracles which constitute the first and most palpable vouchers for its authority.

Our knowledge of God, our knowledge of the morally right and wrong, our knowledge of our own hearts, our knowledge even of human life and character as grounded chiefly on personal observation, are all otherwise derived than from the testimony of historians; and on the consistency between all this knowledge and the subject-matter of the bible, there is founded a great part of what is commonly recognised as internal evidence. It seems in most instances to receive this appellation of internal, when the subject-matter of the Bible is brought immediately to the tribunal of a man's own sense and a man's own judgment—whether it is to the light of conscience and consciousness, or to the light of a well-exercised discernment into human character and affairs. Were we to avail ourselves of the distinction here between the truths of instruction and those of information, we should say of all the argument which is founded on the harmony between scripture and the former class of truths, that it belongs to the department of the internal —whereas when founded on the harmony between scripture and the latter class of truths, it belongs to the department of the external evidences. Yet such is the difficulty of framing an unexceptionable definition on this subject, that, on the one hand, the agreement between the subject-matter of the Bible and the informations of Josephus and other Jewish or profane authors, is referred to the head of the internal evidences; and on the other hand, though a stronger argument for the miracles of the New Testament may be gathered, as we have abundantly endeavoured to show, from within than

from without the canon, from the original testimony of scriptural than from the subsequent testimony of ex-scriptural writers—yet is the whole of this argument referred to the department of the external evidences.

4. But whether we succeed or not in this work of classification, it does not affect the substantive reality and strength of the various branches of evidence, however they may have been grouped when we view them separately. There is however one general remark applicable to almost all the evidence for Christianity, and which we are unwilling to pass over. It is well known that the defenders of Christianity have often been led to certain walks of argument and investigation, on which they might not otherwise have entered by some hostile assault or other of the enemies of the faith. When a combatant has pointed the finger of scorn to some alleged weakness; some vulnerable quarter, whether in the outworks or in the substance itself of Christianity—it has often ended with the counter-demonstration of a strength in that very quarter, of which neither the church nor the public had any conception before. The objection of adversaries first drew to it the attention of friends; and they have achieved a great deal more than simply displaced the objection. They have built up a strong affirmative evidence in its room. They have not been content with the overthrow of that hostile argument which first led them to the ground, and there set them on some specific walk of reasoning or of inquiry. They have generally chosen to prosecute that walk further; and the fruit has been,

not a defence merely against the particular infidelity which had provoked them to the combat, but a great positive conquest over it. The alleged disproof has been turned into a weapon against the adversary; and, where we at one time in the battles of the faith were told to look at a breach, an opening or place of exposure—there we now behold the firmest of its bulwarks. Such for example we flatter ourselves to be the effect of Hume's peculiar scepticism on the subject of testimony, when the right treatment is bestowed on it. A great positive gain redounds to the Christian argument, if it have been proved, not only that there is enough of that best and highest testimony which neutralizes the improbability of a miracle—but as much more of it as creates a vast overplus of evidence in favour of the gospel miracles, and brings them down to posterity as far the best authenticated facts which have been transmitted to us in the history of ancient times. The same has been the upshot of the controversy, first provoked by infidels, on the alleged discrepancies between one part of scripture and another. The defenders of the faith have not only adjusted these; but they have made a more strenuous inquisition than was necessary for this service alone; and the result is that, beneath the surface of general observation, they have discovered such a number of before unobserved harmonies—such minute and till then unnoticed coincidences, that no impostor could ever have devised, or, if he had, then, to serve his own purpose, he would have placed them more openly in the view of all men—such an artless and obviously undesigned correspondence, in many

hundreds of particulars, that had escaped the discernment of all ordinary readers, and that has only been evolved into manifestation by a process of thorough sifting, on the part of those who have been at the pains laboriously to track, and to cross-examine, and to confront the various parts and passages of the record with each other—as nothing possibly can account for, but that the whole narrative or composition has a ground work of truth for its subject-matter. In the present chapter we shall verify this remark by one or two instances, taken from that marvellous work the Horæ Paulinæ of Dr. Paley. But again exceptions have been made to scripture on the ground of its discrepancies, not with itself alone, but with the informations of other and contemporary writers. These have led to a distinct walk of inquiry from the former; and the defenders of revelation have in general reconciled the alleged contradictions. But they have not stopped there. They have discovered, we mean Lardner and his followers, such a profusion of coincidences, and these too of so incidental a character, between the Bible and other writings—such an impregnation of historical truth, or what may be termed the truth of the times, as never could have been amalgamated by the skill of any fabricator, with a work either of fictitious design or that was the production of a later age. In like manner, the alleged immoralities of scripture have led to the triumphant exhibition of the moral, which some would place on a level with the miraculous argument for the truth of Christianity. But in no walk of evidence, we think, has the observation

we now make been more remarkably verified, than in that which is termed the experimental. The subject-matter of Christianity has been represented as incongruous with the state of human nature, and as therefore inapplicable to the rectification or the improvement of it. On the contrary, no argument has proved more effective on the side of the gospel of Jesus Christ—none has been so mightily instrumental in gaining disciples to the faith—as the deep insight of this religion into the before unrevealed mysteries of the human spirit, and the adaptation of its doctrines to the felt condition and necessities of the species.

5. In all these instances, there is a distinct transition from the negative to the positive. We first repel the alleged disproof; and then, by a continuous and sustained prosecution of the subject, we may succeed in raising a highly affirmative proof upon its overthrow. We might not only, for example, clear away from Revelation the burden of all its alleged immoralities; but we may evince the perfection and refinement of the moral system of the Gospel to be such—that, when contrasted with the licentious and revengeful system of Paganism on the one hand, or with illiberal Judaism on the other, it may manifest itself not to have originated with the fishermen of Galilee, but to have descended upon them by inspiration from heaven. Or again, not only may the imputed contradictions all be reconciled; but such recondite harmonies may be evolved; such obviously undesigned coincidences, as were beyond the reach or the policy of any impostor, may be fetched from

beneath the surface of common and cursory observation; such minute and before unobserved symphonies between parts lying remote from each other may be brought out to view, as never could have been realized without a common substratum of truth to rest upon—that, out of these materials, a most impressive argument, and altogether of a positive character, on the side of the christian religion, may be constructed—as has been done in most masterly and felicitous style by Dr. Paley in his Horæ Paulinæ. Or again, not only may we manifest, that there is nought of discrepancy between the Bible, and either the history and state of the world, or the state of human nature; but that throughout the narrative and doctrine of the sacred volume, there is a most marvellous accordancy with both; and on these may be grounded, not merely the affirmative proof of that sustained connexion which obtains between scripture and secular history, but that experimental proof which, in one branch of it, we hold to be the most effective of all for gaining proselytes to the faith. We mean the proof that is afforded by the felt agreement between the statements of the Bible and the state of the inquirer's own breast—by the manifold adaptations of Christianity to the moral nature of man—by the adjustment which obtains, like that of a mould to its counterpart die, between the offered remedy of the Gospel and the diseases of humanity, as for example between the propitiation that is set forth to us from heaven and the guilt which trembles upon earth. In all this, there is not merely a power to constrain the attention but to convince

and satisfy the judgment; there is a light struck out between the Bible on the one hand, and the conscience on the other, which radiates, not a fanatic gleam, but a clear and rational evidence on the soul—and which, however disowned or perhaps derided in the schools of literature, is a powerful instrument of discovery notwithstanding, and would be enough of itself to guide the path whether of the peasant or of the philosopher to heaven.

6. At present we begin with an evidence which is strictly and wholly internal, founded on the agreements between scripture and scripture—such agreements as no impostor would have devised, and which therefore can only be accounted for by the general truth and authenticity of the whole. The initial step, in the track of this investigation, is, to deliver the Bible from the charge of its seeming contradictions—for even at first sight, and on the most slight and superficial view, appearances of this sort do stand palpably forth on the face of the record—such therefore as a superficial infidelity would be the most ready to seize upon. Now every semblance of this nature, if satisfactorily done away or disposed of on a nearer and stricter examination, forms a distinct argument in favour of the revelation—proving, as it does, such an absence of care and contrivance as could only proceed from the consciousness of truth on the part of the narrator—else he would not have exposed himself to a discredit, which every author, who tries to palm a fabrication upon the world, would labour most studiously to avoid. When the alleged discrepancy obtains between different writers in

scripture, as the evangelists of the New Testament—the legitimate inference on the adjustment of such discrepancy is, that there could be no collision between them; and that their testimonies therefore are independent of each other. This whole subject has been investigated with much detail, and been most ably and elaborately argued by the defenders of Christianity.* It will be found, that, with very few exceptions, these apparent contradictions all admit of an actual solution; and the remaining ones, of a solution which may be termed hypothetical—that is a solution which would perfectly account for the seeming discrepancy, on certain given suppositions not unlikely in themselves, though not expressly warranted by any informations that we actually possess. Even here the principle which we have elsewhere laboured to demonstrate will be found of avail—we mean the use of an hypothesis in controversial argument, not as being competent to the office of establishing a proof, but altogether competent to the office of repelling an objection. If the supposition in question remove the discrepancy, and if, for *aught we know*, the supposition may be true or is not incredible—then, although not of strength enough to warrant its own absolute certainty, it may at least be of strength enough to keep an objection at abeyance, so that it shall not be suffered, when thus capable of being disposed of, to overset a religion having such weight

* We have a pretty full list of these contradictions in Horne's "Introduction to the Holy Scriptures." Ed. 7th, Vol. ii. Part II. Book II. ch. vii. sect. vi.—with an account of the manner in which they are reconciled.

and variety of positive evidence in its favour. It reconciles us all the more to this conclusion on the subject of these remaining difficulties, that the labours of criticism are constantly diminishing the number of them—the affirmation of Michaelis respecting the alleged misquotations of the Old Testament in the New, which form one species of apparent inconsistency, holding true of them all.—"Having found," he says, "by actual experience and a more minute investigation of the subject, that many passages, which other critics as well as myself had taken for false quotations, were yet properly cited by the Apostles, I trust that future critics will be able to solve the doubts in the few examples that remain."* It is thus that the hypothetical solutions are at length converted into actual ones; and, on the strength of both, such a vindication has been effected, as not merely to neutralize the objection, but to substantiate a strong affirmative proof in favour of the artless honesty of writers, who evidently practised no elaboration for the purpose of sustaining a veri-similitude in the absence of verity, or giving an aspect of consistency to imposture.

7. But the argument thus obtained from the adjustment of these seeming contradictions and differences, is distinct from the argument on which we are now to insist, and which is obtained from the discovery that has been made, in this same line of investigation, of a mighty host of coincidences before unnoticed and unknown. For many cen-

* Michaelis' Introduction by Marsh. Ed. 4th, Vol. i. p. 210.

turies the christian world had not been aware of their existence; because placed as it were in latent depths beneath the reach of cursory or superficial observation, whence they have at length been extracted and exposed to view by the diligence of critics and collators. We have already referred to the happiest specimen of this in the Horæ Paulinæ of Dr. Paley, who not only, as if by the use of a probing instrument in most skilful hands, has found his way to these hidden treasures; but gathered and arranged them into a cabinet of truly precious things, for the entertainment and solid instruction of his readers. There are only two hypotheses, which can account for the perfect correspondence that he exhibits, between remote informations, and often fragments of information, which he has brought together from the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul—and so as to make out of them, in each instance, one entire and consistent fact or passage in the history of the Apostle. Either it must have been a true history, or else a most artful and laborious fabrication. It must have had a real groundwork in a series of actual occurrences; or it must have been the sustained and skilful invention of one, who so pieced and adjusted one part to another, as to present us with that immense and ever-increasing number of circumstantial agreements, which are now set forth in open manifestation to the general eye. Their exceeding minuteness and variety, altogether refute the imagination that they could have happened at random; and this shuts us up to one or other of the two hypotheses—an authentic story; or a most

intricate and refined imposture, the chief plausibilities of which however were to lie in reserve for nearly two thousand years, till, by a process of development almost as laborious as the original invention of them, they should at length become patent to general observation, and then work their full and favourable effect on the minds of a distant posterity. Such a species of practising is wholly unexampled in the history of this world's delusions. We might as soon expect that the pretender to an estate would, with his own hands, tear the likeliest of its forged title-deeds into fragments and then bury them in scattered portions under ground,—where in the course of generations they might be reassembled by some future antiquaries into a demonstration, that his were the valid rights of the property, that these were the undoubted evidences of himself being the legitimate proprietor. No impostor would first devise a number, an exceeding number of specious likelihoods in his favour; and then deposit them in places so inaccessible, as that not one in ten thousand could be in the least aware of them. This is not the way of an impostor, who is ever sure to set himself off to the greatest and most immediate advantage, and who for this purpose would make all his proofs and pretensions stand forth as discernibly as possible before the eye of public observation. There remains no other conclusion then, respecting these inferred and altogether undesigned congruities, than that they are the vestiges and proofs of a real history, and of which the world was not conscious till thoroughly explored by the shrewd and fortunate adventurer

who had opened his way to them, as to a rich mine of evidence, and thence gathered the materials of an overpowering argument for the truth of our religion. But, instead of attempting the general description of this mode of inference, it is better that we should present the reader with at least one or two of its specimens—selected, not altogether because they are the most striking in the collection, but because they are among the shortest.

8. "Colossians iv. 9. 'With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, *who is one of you*.'

"Observe how it may be made out that Onesimus was a Colossian. Turn to the Epistle to Philemon, and you will find that Onesimus was the servant or slave of Philemon. The question will therefore be, to what city Philemon belonged. In the epistle addressed to him this is not declared. It appears only that he was of the same place, whatever that place was, with an eminent christian named Archippus. 'Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved and fellow-labourer; and to our beloved Apphia, and *Archippus* our fellow soldier, and to the church in thy house.' Now turn back to the epistle to the Colossians, and you will find Archippus saluted by name amongst the christians of that church. 'Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord that thou fulfil it' (iv. 17). The necessary result is, that Onesimus also was of the same city, agreeably to what is said of him 'he is one of you.' And this result is the effect either of truth which produces consistency without the writer's

thought or care, or of a contexture of forgeries confirming and falling in with one another by a species of fortuity of which I know no example. The supposition of design, I think, is excluded, not only because the purpose to which the design must have been directed, viz., the verification of the passage in our epistle in which it is said concerning Onesimus, 'he is one of you,' is a purpose which would be lost upon ninety-nine readers out of a hundred; but because the means made use of are too circuitous to have been the subject of affectation and contrivance. Would a forger, who had this purpose in view, have left his readers to hunt it out, by going forward and backward from one epistle to another in order to connect Onesimus with Philemon, Philemon with Archippus, and Archippus with Colosse? all which he must do before he arrives at his discovery, that it was truly said of Onesimus, 'he is one of you.'

"2 Timothy iii. 15. 'And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation.'

"This verse discloses a circumstance which agrees exactly with what is intimated in Acts xvi. 1. where it is recorded of Timothy's mother 'that she was a Jewess.' This description is virtually, though I am satisfied, undesignedly, recognized in the epistle, when Timothy is reminded in it 'that from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures.' The Holy Scriptures undoubtedly meant the Scriptures of the Old Testament. The expression bears that sense in every place in which it occurs. Those of the new had not yet acquired the name,

not to mention that in Timothy's childhood probably, none of them existed. In what manner then could Timothy have known 'from a child' the Jewish Scriptures had he not been born on one side or both of Jewish parentage? Perhaps he was not less likely to be carefully instructed in them, for that his mother alone professed that religion."

9. These are but two specimens out of many alike impressive, and they are yet far from being exhausted. They will be still further multiplied by the labours of future inquirers, and so as to form an accumulating evidence, and of a kind too strictly and wholly internal—educed as it is altogether from the comparison of scripture with scripture. Were the agreements thus manifested obvious and explicit, refuge might be taken in the imputation of forgery; but, when they can only be obtained by a very circuitous track of investigation, all suspicion of contrivance is effectually done away. It is this which constitutes the main strength of that circumstantial evidence which lies in the depositions of living witnesses, who exhibit a sustained coincidence without collusion, and that too in evidence of the utmost particularity. It is consent without concert, in things of such exceeding minuteness and variety, that stamps a credit upon testimony, even when the character and condition of the witnesses are altogether unknown—nor is it necessary, for the purpose of feeling its strength, that more should be attended to than the testimony itself. The two species of agreement are quite distinguishable—that which is the fruit of artifice,

and that which is altogether unsought and spontaneous; and it is the exceeding multitude of these last which makes the history of Paul, as educed from the Acts of the Apostles and from his own epistles, so pregnant with an evidence of the highest order. For these documents admit of being confronted and cross-examined in the same way that living witnesses are, who, if found to agree in every point even the most incidental and the most exempt from every appearance of design—then no other conviction can possibly result from their *common* testimony, than that it is the evidence of a common truth to which all the parties had access, and on which the statements of them all are founded. The closeness and exactness of these now evolved harmonies are all the more impressive that they were before unnoticed, and which go therefore irresistibly to prove that they were also undevised—for they would not have answered the purposes of forgery. The evidence afforded by these unexpected junctions of so many little fragments which lie far apart from each other, has been aptly compared by Dr. Paley himself to the evidence given by the parts of a cloven tally, as being indeed the real parts of a real and authentic whole. No such contexture could have come forth of the hands of fiction or imposture—which never would have busied itself in framing a tissue, not of palpable but of unseen consistencies, that never could have been known, had it not been for the labours of a dexterous analyst who succeeded, but with great pains, to open up and unravel them. The thread, to use Dr. Paley's own image, which touches upon

so many points, would have been set forth more fully and plainly, by the original fabricator, if the whole be indeed a fabrication, and not left to be disentangled from the mass in which it lies enveloped—proving incontrovertibly, that it is a substratum or a ground-work of truth from which it has been taken. The reciprocal illustration cast by texts or clauses of texts far asunder from each other, as being obviously not the result of studied adaptation, can only be the result of that living reality which pervades and animates the whole. The immense number of such correspondences, as if by an author altogether unconscious or certainly without the least endeavour to display them, yields an evidence of the strongest sort—an evidence too independent of history, and not drawn from any external source, from any outward credentials; but from the very contents and substance of the record itself.

10. And it is an evidence not confined to that special department of scripture, whence it has been gathered in such teeming and marvellous profusion by the hand of Dr. Paley. We believe that it is an evidence more or less to be found in every true narrative of any considerable length, which has descended to us from ancient times. We must therefore expect to meet with it in other parts of scripture; and accordingly, this successful attempt of Paley, has been followed up by successful imitations on the part of other labourers. The direct narrative of the transactions in the Pentateuch, and the proper record of which is to be found in the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, is again presented to us in an altered and abridged

form in the book of Deuteronomy. The comparison of the history with its recapitulation has been ably prosecuted by Dr. Groves; and much pleasing evidence of this kind has been deduced by him.* The same has been well accomplished by Mr. Blunt in another portion of scripture—the four Gospels which he confronts both with each other and with the Acts of the Apostles.† We offer from the latter performance a few brief specimens of that coincidence without design on which the whole of this particular argument is founded.—Compare Matt. viii. 14. with 1 Cor. ix. 5, where from each passage, and obviously not copied the one from the other, we gather that Peter was a married man.—Read the four following passages, Mark vi. 3, Luke viii. 19, John ii. 12, and Matt. xii. 46; and it will be found that the death of Joseph is indirectly shewn by all the four evangelists, to have happened when Christ was alive; and we add, that from Luke ii. 42, 43, it appears to have happened after he was twelve years of age. In keeping with this, no mention is made of Joseph at the feast of Cana, or at the resurrection.—There are certain minute and delicate traits, and certainly not the less effective on that account, of the authorship of the gospels by Matthew and John, and which harmonize with the received understanding, that themselves were the writers of them. The following are two examples taken from the former of these evangelists.

* See Groves' Lectures on the four last books of the Pentateuch, designed to show the divine origin of the Jewish religion, chiefly from Internal Evidence.

† See Blunt's veracity of the Gospel and Acts, from their coincidences with each other and with Josephus.

In Matt. ix. 10, Jesus is represented as sitting down to meat with publicans and sinners in *the* house. When the same transaction is recorded in Mark ii. 15, it is called *his* house, the house of Matthew. In Luke v. 29, it is called *his own* house. It was natural in the proprietor to call it *the*, rather than his or his own house. It forms another internal mark of truth that so many publicans should have been of the party. Again in Matt. x. 2, &c., the Apostles are enumerated in pairs, probably from their being sent in their respective missions by two and two. Matthew is associated with Thomas; and when the enumeration is made by Matthew, Thomas is named first. In Mark iii. 18, and Luke vi. 15, Matthew is named the first. The discreditable circumstance of his having been a publican is kept out of sight by the two latter evangelists, but noticed with characteristic modesty by Matthew himself.—In Matt. xiv. 1, 2, we find Herod speaking to his *servants*, of Jesus, which was very likely to happen, if he knew them to have been interested in Jesus and aware of him. This is corroborated both in Luke viii. 3, where mention is made of Joanna the wife of Herod's steward, and Acts xiii. 1, where we read of Manaen brought up with Herod.—In Matt. xxvi. 67, 68, they who struck Jesus with the palms of their hands are made to say, "Prophesy (or divine) unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?"—a challenge to the supernatural pretensions of him who profest to be the Messiah, that is not very intelligible from the omission of a circumstance supplied by another evangelist. In Luke xxii. 64,

we are told that he was *blindfolded*.—In Matt. xxvi. 65, the charge on which the Jews condemned Christ was *blasphemy*—a crime of all others the best fitted to make him the object of popular indignation. Whereas in Luke xxiii. 2, when instead of being accused before the Jews, he was taken to the Roman governor before whom this charge would not have been so effective, he was represented as "perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a king." All this is in harmony, but surely an unstudied harmony, with John x. 33, John v. 18, and Acts xxiii. 29.—Lastly, in John vi. 5, we find Jesus singling out Philip in the question he put, as to the means that could be provided at the place where they then were, for the entertainment of a multitude overtaken with hunger. In Luke ix. 10, we read that it was a desert place, belonging to a city called Bethsaida. And lastly, in John i. 44, we are told that Philip was of Bethsaida—the likeliest person then to whom this question should have been addressed. These are but a few examples out of the many. In Mr. Blunt's work, which is a superior performance, the reader will meet with a goodly number of others to the full as striking and satisfactory, as those which we have now given.

11. Scripture throughout is replete with this internal evidence; but, without instancing any other or separate portions of it, let us advert for one moment to that great and general coincidence —that unity of purpose and counsel, by which from first to last the whole of it is pervaded. In the whole history of the world, there is nothing that

bears the least resemblance to it—an authorship beginning with Moses and terminating with the Apostle John, that is, sustained by a series of writers for 1500 years, many of them isolated from all the rest, and the greater part of whom were unknowing and unknown to each other, insomuch that there could be no converse and no possible concert between them. A conspiracy between parties or individuals so situated had been altogether superhuman. Their lots were cast in different generations; and nothing can explain the consistency or continuity of their movements towards one and the same great object, but that they were instruments in the hands of the one God, who, from generation to generation, keeps unchangeably by the counsels of His unerring wisdom, and the determinations of His unerring will. The convergency towards one and the same fulfilment of so many different lights, appearing in different ages of the world and placed at such a distance from each other, admits we think of but one interpretation—nor, without the power and the prescience of an overruling God, can we account for that goodly that regular progression of consentaneous and consecutive authorship, which is carried forward by the legislators and seers and historians of the children of Israel. And this evidence is not confined to the articulate testimony of their writings. The ritual, the institutions, the events, of which their priestly and consecrated land was the theatre, all tell us of the same thing; and announce that divine harmony which connects the dim prefigurations of the elder with the brighter developments

of the latter dispensation. There is a minute and microscopic cognizance which might be taken of the harmonies of scripture, and which comes intimately home to the conviction of the inquirer; but there is also a consistency of greater lineaments —an unbroken continuity of design which passes onward from century to century—the congruities, not of one personal history, but of a scheme that commences with the first origin and has its consummation in the final destinies of our species—a succession of profest revelations, of which the first and last stand apart at the distance of greatly more than a millennium, yet all actuated by one reigning spirit, and having, for their object the establishment of a spiritual economy which might reconcile glory to God in the highest with peace on earth and good will to men—these form the correspondences, not of a story that embraces but the transactions of one individual, but of a system which is commensurate to the world and bespeaks in its leading characters the mind and the majesty of God.*

12. But there is another species of adaptation, alike prolific of argument with that on which we have insisted hitherto—not the coincidence only which obtains between scripture and scripture, but the coincidence alike varied and minute and circumstantial, which obtains between scripture and the works either of Jewish or Christian authors—or rather between scripture and the state of things as made known by these authors in and about Judea. The title of Mr. Blunt's work to which we have

* We ask the reader to reflect how unlike in this respect the religion of Mahomet is to that of Jesus Christ.

already referred, is, "The veracity of the Gospels and Acts from their coincidences with each other and *Josephus*." The truth is that from the one comparison we might educe an argument of the very same character and effect, with that more strictly internal argument, which, by means of the other comparison, has been presented with such signal ability and success by Dr. Paley. In mathematics, if one line of perfect straightness but coincide with another in two points, then they are perfectly straight throughout and coincide universally. What is now affirmed of a line in mathematics does not hold to the same extent of a line in history—but certain it is, that the greater is the number of points at which any given history coincides with another that is received and trusted in as authentic, the greater is the probability of their entire coincidence both with truth and with each other—the inference from their mutual agreement being, that both copied from and therefore that both agree with the same original realities which they are employed in describing. This probability is greatly enhanced by the situation in which we find these points of coincidence—that is in situations the least prominent, the least noticeable, the least obtrusive, and therefore the least likely to attract the observation of readers or inquirers. We can imagine a number of coincidences to be framed by an inventor, but then it would be in places which served his immediate purpose best; nor would he ever think of devising a number of coincidences, and then placing them so beyond the reach of common access or observation, that not one in ten thousand of his readers ever could have

discovered them. They are agreements like these which form the materials of one and the same argument, whether in the process of internal or of external comparison. When the comparison is between parts of scripture, the resulting evidence is like that afforded by the fragments of a cloven tally. When the comparison is between scripture and other authors, the resulting evidence is altogether of the same genus—though, without supposing a disjunction of parts, it is more like that afforded by the adaptation of a key to its lock, of a die to its counterpart mould, of a seal to its impression, or of any unbroken whole to the external contour from which it has taken both its dimensions and its outline.

13. The literature connected with this part of the argument too was, like the other, originated by infidelity. Contradictions were alleged by Woolston and others, between scripture and the known customs and history of scripture times; and, not only have these been satisfactorily disposed of; but the ulterior achievement in this walk of investigation has been, that a strong affirmative evidence is now raised, on the basis of a deeper and more manifold coincidence, between scripture and external history or external observation, than was before known or even imagined. Both ancient writers and modern travellers have made their respective contributions to this argument, which, though defensive at the first, has earned a great positive accession to the cause, and made it far more rich in evidence than before. In the work of reconciling the apparent contradictions, the

student will not fail to observe the operation of a principle to which we have often adverted—a disposition on the part, not of infidel only, but of christian writers also, to defer greatly more to the testimony of the exscriptural than to that of the scriptural authors—insomuch, that, on every semblance of a disagreement betwixt them, the blemish or suspicion is always associated with the latter and not with the former. Matthew and Mark and Luke and John and Paul are sisted as parties or pannels at the bar—while Josephus and Philo and Tacitus and Pliny are made the judges, at whose tribunal they must wait their sentence, whether of acquittal or condemnation. Nay, the silence of the profane, has often been construed into an impeachment against the testimony of the sacred authors—whereas the converse treatment has never been attempted in the way of retaliation by the defenders of Christianity. If it had, the attempt would have been resented, and most warrantably, by every sound eruditionist or critic—for how are the informations of history to grow upon our hands, unless each individual writer be permitted to offer some contributions of his own? There might be enough of common truth among the esteemed authors of antiquity, to authenticate their respective narrations—so that, while Tacitus obtains full credit for all that is peculiar in his history, why might not evangelists and Apostles be indulged also in their peculiar statements, even when no foreign corroboration is to be found? But it is when the evangelists are not only unsupported, but to appearance contradicted by profane or Jewish writers, that

this disparity in their treatment becomes most obvious. For example, Josephus tells that Cyrenius was not governor of Syria till ten or twelve years after the time at which Luke, in the first and second verses of his third chapter, seems to tell us that he was the governor of that province. It seems a settled point among the controvertists on both sides of this question that Josephus must be right, and the mistake, if any, must be Luke's.* The defenders of Christianity scarcely ever think of boldly retorting the possibility that Josephus or Tacitus or Pliny might be mistaken. The infallibility is all conceded to the exscriptural authors; and the great effort is to clear up the apparent misstatements or mistakes, into which it is assumed, on every case of an aspect of contrariety, that the evangelical writers must have fallen. In the particular instance now referred to, this has been effectively done by the indefatigable Lardner, who conceives that Cyrenius had made an assessment at the time of our Saviour's birth, and before he was governor of Syria; but that Luke, in telling the transaction, mentions Cyrenius, not as

* "When St. Luke, then, and Josephus differ in their accounts of the same fact, the question is, which of the two writers has given the true one? And here it is not a little extraordinary, that without further inquiry it is universally determined in favour of the latter, as if Josephus were inspired, and whoever contradicted him must of course be mistaken. This is a method of proceeding which is applied on no other occasion," &c.

"This at least is certain, that if we found the same contradiction in the relation of a fact between either Greek, or Roman, or modern historians, we should not hesitate to prefer the author who was contemporary to the event related, and who to a knowledge of the person described joins minuteness and impartiality, to him who lived in a later period, and wrote a general history, of which the subject in question was only an inconsiderable part." Michaelis' Introduction, Vol. i. Part II. chap. ii. sect. xii.

being actually governor at the time, but as one who now, or at the moment of his writing, in virtue of having received the preferment some time afterwards, had the title affixed to his name; and which is often given to individuals—even when relating those parts of their history, that take place either previous or subsequent to the period of their official dignity.

14. But not only, in the progress of criticism, are these contradictions rapidly clearing away, so as to present a number that is gradually and perpetually lessening; but their force is well nigh disarmed, in that they seem now as if lost and overborne, in the affirmative evidence of those opposite harmonies, which every new labourer in this field of inquiry is adding to the list—and such harmonies too, as nothing but truth can explain. The richest collection of these is to be met with in Lardner, who—if we read of the trials, or the travels, or the customs, or the controversies, or the local and national peculiarities, or the varieties of incident and discourse which are recorded in the New Testament—finds in every contemporaneous author who borders on the same ground, and may even have entered upon it, or in the subjects of which he treats, whether they be Chronology, or Geography, or Jurisprudence, or History, or facts and statistics of any sort—finds in every such author, and in every such subject, a test or a touchstone which he might apply to the writings of the evangelists and apostles, and by which he might determine the accuracy of their statements or allusions both to the circumstances and the

events of the period which is described by them. The restless politics of that age—the perpetual changes then taking place in the government of provinces, and the territorial distribution of the lesser states, more especially of Judea—the limits and respective functions of the civil and military power in these subjugated countries, adverted to so frequently in Scripture, and open either to disproof or confirmation from the well-known practice and polity of the Romans—these, and such as these, make up altogether a most delicate and severe ordeal, by which to detect the mistakes of ignorance, or the misstatements of forgery and fiction. It is strikingly demonstrated by Lardner in the first part of his Credibility, how well the writers of the New Testament have stood this ordeal. We can scarcely afford to offer any of the particulars of that very minute and statistical examination into which he has gone. In his chapter on the Princes and Governors mentioned in the New Testament, the evangelical writers stand confronted chiefly with Josephus—both as to the name and title and history and period of these ever-shifting functionaries, and as to the limits of their respective jurisdictions. For one example out of the very many—when Herod who had possession of the whole country died, and Joseph the reputed father of our Lord returned from Egypt—he was afraid of Archelaus, who, in the division that took place after his father's death, was made king of Judea—and turned aside to the parts of Galilee, not now under the same government; for Herod Antipas, as Josephus tells us, was then governor of Galilee

and Peræa, and Philip of Trachonitis and the neighbouring countries. Among the manifold points of agreement that are elicited by this comparison between the incidental allusions of the New Testament and the direct informations of the Jewish historian, we would instance the passage which relates to this Herod and which respects both his wife Herodias and his daughter Salome—as also the story of another Herod mentioned in the Acts, who was grandson of Herod the Great, who killed James, and apprehended Peter, and suffered a remarkable death, and which, as respects all that is ostensible in the testimony of Luke, is fully borne out by the testimony of Josephus.—Regarding this last Herod, there occurs what may truly be termed a very critical coincidence—inasmuch as Luke ascribes to him, towards the end of his government, the sovereign power in Judea; and it appears from other sources, that this power he actually did exercise, but only during the three last years of his life.—We have a nicety of a still more trying description in the title of Proconsul given with propriety by the Evangelist, but a propriety dependent on the fluctuations that were constantly taking place in the arrangement and constitution of the Roman provinces.—In another chapter respecting the state of the Jews and Judea during the ministry of Christ and his apostles, the history in the Gospel is brought into contact at many points with that of Josephus and others. We advert but to one of these instances—the power of life and death reserved to themselves by the Romans, while the

power of the lesser punishments was suffered to remain with the Jewish authorities.—It is only for the purpose of noticing the amount of surface over which this work of comparison has been extended, that we advert to the title of his next chapter, "of the state of the Jews out of Judea"—whilst the title of the following, "concerning the Jewish sects and Samaritans," serves to evince how crowded the four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles are with the materials of a cross-examination between their respective authors and Josephus. The next succeeding chapter of the Jews and Samaritans' expectations and their idea of the Messiah, brings even heathen authors into a state of juxtaposition with the writers of the New Testament.—But perhaps, no passages of the evangelical history are more replete with this sort of argument, than the single chapters which retail the circumstances of our Saviour's last sufferings, where we have the names and titles and respective powers of the respective dignitaries that were concerned in this solemn transaction—the process of trial and condemnation—the infliction of mockery and scourging that took place before the execution—the bearing of the cross—the inscription of the offence upon it in three different languages, which is fully deponed to by classic authors as one of the customs of the age—the mockeries which He had to endure at the time of the crucifixion—the place of it, without the city of Jerusalem—the burial, and lastly the embalming of the body. Nothing can be more artless or incidental than the manner, in which all these particulars are detailed by

the Apostles; and yet, such testimonies can be brought together both of the Jewish and classic authors, as to furnish throughout the most ample and sustained corroboration—carried forward, beyond the death and resurrection, to the accounts which the New Testament gives of the various churches that were founded by the first teachers of Christianity. Here we have a chapter of close and manifold communion between the scriptural and the exscriptural, in the account it gives of the treatment which the apostles and other disciples of Jesus met with both from Jews and Gentiles. The chapter which follows treats of diverse opinions and practices of the Jews; and we shall finish our very general description of this vast and voluminous evidence, by the catalogue which Lardner makes of the Roman customs mentioned in the New Testament—First, the use of the question or of torture for the discovery of crimes by the Romans—then of their method of examination by scourging—then of the unlawfulness of scourging a Roman, especially if uncondemned—then of the power which Lysias who had Paul in custody held at Jerusalem—then of Paul's citizenship—then of the way in which this was obtained by purchase—then of the Roman justice in not receiving accusations in the absence of the person accused—then on the imprisonment of St. Paul—then on the sending of prisoners to Rome—and, lastly, on the practice of their being delivered there to the captain of the guard. Within our narrow limits, we represent most inadequately the power and the abundance of this argument; and perhaps it had been better, for

the purpose of impressing it on the reader, to have made a general reference to Lardner—without attempting, what we have done but slightly, to instance a few of the specimens. The number, the minuteness, the circumstantiality of the allusions, and the manifest undesignedness wherewith they occur in the course of the narration—all serve to satisfy the inquirer, that a history which touches the truth at so many points, could not have done so fortuitously and at random; and these coincidences are so obviously beyond the reach, or even though within possibility could so little subserve any of the purposes of design, that no other conclusion remains for us—but that they touch the truth at so many points, only because they touch it generally or at all points; or because truth is the direction in which the writers of the New Testament move, the groundwork along which the platform of the gospel history is laid. The coincidence with truth at so many places, in the absence of the art that could have framed or even of the power that could have accomplished it, is the sure token of an entire coincidence.

15. One precious fruit of these investigations is, that they have demonstrated, and upon their own new and peculiar evidence alone, the antiquity of the evangelical record. None but contemporary writers could have exhibited so minute and manifold an accuracy, amid the ephemeral changes, which, in these days of incessant fluctuation, were ever taking place in the civil and political arrangements of Judea. And what makes it altogether conclusive is, that, in a few years after the resurrection of our Saviour, Jerusalem was destroyed and the whole

fabric of the Jewish polity was swept away—so that not a fragment or a vestige of it remained. On this tremendous event we feel assured, that the local practices and peculiarities which are so statistically and truly set forth in the New Testament must have been described by eye-witnesses, or at least during the subsistence of the Hebrew commonwealth—for the memory of them could not have survived a single generation. The unavoidable inference as to the early publication of these narratives, is of immense worth to the christian argument—proving, as it does, that they made their appearance at a period far enough back, for affording every facility, whether to the confirmation or the exposure of the miracles which are recorded in them.

16. And there is one great synchronism, which, singly and of itself, fixes the age of the composition of the New Testament; and settles it down to the first age of Christianity. It is such a style as could only have proceeded from men of Hebrew origin, who wrote in Greek, but in a Greek tinged and interspersed with the peculiarities of their own vernacular language. And accordingly, it is alike distinguishable from the language of classic authors, and from that of the christian fathers, of the second and third centuries. To imagine that the innumerable Hebraisms and Syriasms of the New Testament were interpolated, or rather intertwined with the whole structure of the book, for the sole purpose of giving a colour or consistency to its reputed authorship in the days of the Apostles, were to accredit some forger of a later age, with the most difficult,

if not impracticable of all imitations—and the more as the idioms in question, instead of being simply inserted in the volume, are obviously incorporated or interwoven therewith. It is an infusion rather than a mixture; and what altogether precludes the theory of a fabrication, as aggravating tenfold the unlikelihood of its ever being realized, is the distinct and characteristic variety of style, which appears in each of the individual writers—another coincidence, by the way, between the internal character of the volume and its external history. There is no mistaking, for example, the signatures of one and the same hand in the gospel of John and in the epistles which are ascribed to him. And the same remark is applicable to the obvious mannerism of Paul—in whose writings we cannot fail to recognize the same energy, and affection, and argumentative vehemence, and abrupt transitions of a mind fired by its subject, and overflowing with its fulness every new channel which every new suggestion opens up to him. The argument is all the more enhanced by the peculiarities that obtain in the writings of Luke; and by the circumstance that Paul, notwithstanding the peculiarities of his style, gives abundant evidence of that more accomplished literature and general erudition, which harmonize with the accounts that are handed down to us by ecclesiastical history, of his superior education and opportunities to those of the other apostles.*

17. And we have to remark in this department

* Michaelis' Introduction to the New Testament by Marsh, Edition 4th. Part I. chap. ii. sect. x.

too—in the external harmonies of scripture with other and separate testimony, as well as in its internal harmonies with itself—a great and general coincidence, between the whole history which it unfolds to us, and all that is known beside of the history of the world. And the history in the Bible is the history of the world; but under the peculiar aspect, in the language of Butler, of its being God's world.* He deduces a strong argument for the truth of scripture, from the immense number of places at which it lies open to comparison with profane history; and yet the manner in which it stands its ground, and bears to be confronted with all the informations and documents of antiquity. This argument for the general truth of scripture grows in strength and intensity, the more intensely it is reflected on. This book professes to be an account of the world regarded as the dominion and property of God; and, both in its commencement and its conclusion as well as its intermediate contents, there is a greatness altogether commensurate to this object—beginning as it does with the creation of the species, and ending with an account of the two distinct and everlasting destinies which await the two great divisions of the human family. In the conducting of this sublime narrative, there are references to beings and places external to our world, arising from the interchanges which are said to have taken place between the visible and the invisible—the occasional visits from heaven to earth, actual or alleged—the inspirations which descended

* Analogy, Part II. chap. vii.

upon men; and, in the course of these allusions we have not only repeated notices of God, but of other orders of intelligence beside ourselves and of the relations in which we stand to them. Now, in the glimpses which are thus afforded of an extended moral economy, we are unable to confront the informations of scripture, with any independent knowledge of our own. We have no direct or personal observation of angels and spirits; and we are not in circumstances, either for obtaining a confirmation of the Bible, or of detecting in its statements any marks of imposture—by comparing what it tells of things supernal to the world, with aught that we previously or originally know of these things.

18. But the Scripture not only offers notices and allusions in regard to matters external to the world; it offers these notices far more abundantly in regard to matters that are within the compass of the world, but external to the church—and all which matters, unlike to the former, were within the compass of human observation, and many of which have been derived by historical transmission to ourselves in the present day. The truth is, that the Bible may be said to present us with a general outline of the world's history—as consisting in the movement of nations, in the rise and fall of earth's great empires, in the most noted chronological eras; and adventuring, as it does, both on the names of countries, and the monarchs that ruled over them, and the manners that characterised their people—never did imposture, if imposture indeed it be, so expose herself to a thousand lights of cross-examination, or so multiply

her vulnerable points, by the daring and extended sweep, that she has thus taken among the affairs of men. There is something incredible in a compact or conspiracy of deceivers, the scheme and spirit of which were handed down from one to another through a whole millenium; but that one and all of them should have sustained such a general historic consistency through the whole of that period, that no glaring contradiction has yet been detected, between the multitude of incidental notices that the penmen of Scripture have made to the countries around Judea, and at a great distance from it, and the actual state of the world—that sacred and profane history should so have harmonized, as that a consistent erudition, made up of an immense variety of particulars, has actually been raised and established out of the connection* between them—that there should be such a sustained coincidence from the first dawnings of history, and extended by means of prophetic anticipation to the present day—truly, apart from the peculiar evidence of prophecy altogether, there is much in the artless and unforced agreements which are everywhere spread over so broad a surface of comparison, as to stamp the strongest appearance of truth both on the general narrative of the bible, and by implication, on the miraculous narrative, that, without the slightest appearance of ingenuity or elaborate design, is so incorporated therewith.

* See Shuckford, Prideaux, and Russel on the connections between sacred and profane History.

CHAPTER II.

On the Moral Evidence for the Truth of the New Testament.

1. The argument of the last chapter is of frequent application in questions of general criticism; and upon its authority alone many of the writers of past times have been admitted into credit, and many have been condemned as unworthy of it. The numerous and correct allusions to the customs and institutions, and other statistics of the age in which the pieces of the New Testament profess to have been written, give evidence of their antiquity. The artless and undesigned way in which these allusions are interwoven with the whole history, impresses upon us the perfect simplicity of the authors, and the total absence of every wish or intention to palm an imposture upon the world. And there is such a thing, too, as a general air of authenticity; which, however difficult to resolve into particulars, gives a very close and powerful impression of truth to the narrative. There is nothing fanciful in this species of internal evidence. It carries in it all the certainty of experience, and experience too upon a familiar and well-known subject, the characters of honesty in the written testimony of our fellow-men. We are often called upon, in private and every-day life, to exercise our judgment upon the spoken testimony of others; and we both feel and understand the powerful

evidence which lies in the tone, the manner, the circumstantiality, the number, the agreement of the witnesses, and the consistency of all the particulars with what we already know from other sources of information. Now, it is undeniable, that all those marks which give evidence and credibility to spoken testimony, may also exist to a very impressive degree in written testimony; and the argument founded upon them, so far from being fanciful or illegitimate, has the sanction of a principle which no philosopher will refuse; the experience of the human mind on a subject on which it is much exercised, and which lies completely within the range of its observation.

2. We now enter on the consideration of the moral evidence for the truth of the New Testament, as gathered, however, not from the present character of the witnesses, but from the nature of that ethical system which they delivered; or, more generally still, not from themselves but from the subject-matter of their testimony. Doubtless, we may collect from the performance itself, such marks of truth and honesty, as entitle us to conclude, that the human agents employed in the construction of this book were men of veracity and principle. But this argument has already been resorted to,* and a very substantial argument it is. Our present attempt is to found an internal evidence for the divinity of scripture on the morality of its doctrines, or the purity of that moral light which

* In Chap. iii. of Book II., where we also adverted to the argument of the last chapter, but not with such particularity or fulness, as to prevent our again recurring to it.

beams from its pages; and which, as distinguished from other systems of religion, whether from revengeful and licentious Paganism on the one hand, or from a corrupted Judaism on the other—seems to invest the New Testament with a sort of celestial radiance, and so to be no unambiguous token of the Heaven from whence it came.

3. But a certain preliminary question requires to be adjusted, ere it is made perfectly clear, that an internal evidence can be raised on the superior and recognized excellence of the Christian morality. For if man be capable of recognizing this excellence, does it not argue him to be alike capable of having conceived it at the first, and so of bringing it forth originally to the view and admiration of the world? The faculty, one might think, of discerning the worth or goodness of any system, would seem to bespeak the faculty of discovering or devising it. If the pure and perfect morality of the gospel be now the theme of universal acknowledgment, and that by minds of every order—why might not some mind of the highest order, at the era of its publication, have been able to originate the ethical system, that was afterwards to command the assent and acquiescence of the enlightened and the virtuous in all ages? The same faculties, it can naturally be imagined, by which we are enabled to appreciate the inherent truth and value of any doctrine, might have also suggested that doctrine—so that not only might men have become its obedient disciples, but a man might have been the inventor of it. In short, it is not perceived, why a thing of earthly recognition, might not be a thing of earthly origination also—or

how if man, in virtue of his natural powers, can justly estimate the merits of any practical code or directory of human conduct, he might not, in virtue of the same powers, have been competent to frame it. It is on this ground that Christianity might be argued, notwithstanding the lustre of its moral superiority over every other faith, to be still a thing of terrestrial growth; and that therefore the hypothesis of a divine revelation is altogether uncalled for.

4. Now, in opposition to this, we hold that many are the truths, which never could have sprung up within the mind—but which, when brought to it from without, meet with the full consent and coalescence of the judgment—and that in virtue, not of any external evidence, but of their own inherent recommendations. There is many a truth, the credibility of which does not serve to indicate it before it is announced, but which abundantly serves to recommend it afterwards. It may have no such light as shall guide the way to it; and yet as much light, as that it may be seen and recognized as truth, on the moment of its being presented. The intellect might remain in a state of darkness and dormancy, as to many a truth which it never could have found; but awakened, as if like a candle by ignition, at the moment of contact with that truth when it is told—it, in a medium of vision thus created, might be led to discern things, and on their own intrinsic evidence too, which it never could have discovered. Of this the experience of the mind itself supplies us with many familiar illustrations. In mathematics, where every doctrine has the ground of conviction

within itself, how frequent are the discoveries which could only have been made by the few, and yet which the many can most completely and most intelligently appreciate? There are propositions of such a particular description, that the very statement of them furnishes the cipher for their own verification; and the mind feels itself placed on a distinct vantage-ground, when, instead of having to go forth in general quest of that which was altogether unknown, its now more limited aim is to certify that of which it has been specifically told. It is a homely, but we think an effective illustration of this—that when desirous of joining in the psalmody at church, but ignorant of the verses which have been given out, we are unable to collect from the general voice of the congregation, the articulate sounds to which they are jointly giving utterance. Yet when directed to the place, we can instantly recognize the coincidence between the notes in the music and the syllables in the lines that have been pointed out to us. It is thus also that a prophecy, respecting the fulfilment of which we are utterly in the dark before hand, might be cleared up afterwards—the coincidence between predictions and events which we could never have discovered, or perhaps even guessed at, becoming manifest as day, on the means of comparison being brought within our reach, when both are set before us. On the same principle too, we shall be able to explain that powerful and peculiar evidence of which we are told in scripture, when it speaks of the manifestation of the truth unto the conscience. But our inquiry at present, is whether the moral system of the Bible

might not be the object of man's most intelligent approval, although he could neither have discovered nor devised it—or whether, though now abundantly met by the acknowledgments of an enlightened human sympathy, it did not require for its first introduction into the world a super-human revelation.

5. The apparent diversities of moral sentiment among men, have been well accounted for by those ethical writers who contend that the standard of duty is one and immutable notwithstanding; and that, not objectively in itself alone, but subjectively, or so as that all men have the same moral nature, and would agree in all their moral perceptions of virtue, if brought under the same moral tuition—insomuch that, to be owned universally, it only needs to be promulgated universally, and in such circumstances as might ensure the serious and sustained attention of all men.* There are seeming exceptions to this, in the state both of individuals and nations—in the one, when conscience is perverted by the sophistry of the passions, or, if not extinguished, brought to utter stupefaction, by the headlong and reckless indulgence of them—in the other, when some urgent and generally felt interest associates whole communities in some practice or sentiment that nevertheless is at war with the common sense of humanity. It is thus that we can imagine, among the families of a smuggling village, or of a piratical state, or even of a large commercial city, in civilized and enlightened Christendom, which owes its wealth and

* See our Natural Theology, Book III., Chap. ii., Art. 18—23.

pre-eminence to the guilty horrors of the slave-trade—we can imagine a very slender comprehension among them, of the unlawfulness of their respective vocations. And this epidemic peculiarity, extending to whole societies of men, is greatly enhanced by the sympathy of a common feeling and a common interest in the midst of them—so as to account for those aberrations from a universal morality, by which whole countries and whole ages of the world have been characterized. It is thus that in those tribes and nations which have to maintain a continued struggle for their existence, revenge and rapacity are canonized as virtues—the obligations of a general equity being lost and overborne, in the obligations of a contracted patriotism. Whether we look to the cruelties of Indian warfare, or to the guilty conquests of Rome, we find, not that the obligations of an unchangeable morality have ever been formally renounced, but that they have been lost sight of and forgotten for centuries together, in the dazzling images of a nation's glory and a nation's weal. Apart from such influences as these—apart from the darkening and disturbing forces that we have now specified—we could obtain the same assent to the same lessons of piety and truth and justice and universal philanthropy all the world over. But the question is, who, in the strength and prevalence of a wide-spread delusion, who is to originate these lessons? We can understand how, should these forces be suspended—how, when the spirit of a man, arrested and solemnized and recalled for a season from those influences which have so long perverted and enthralled it by

a voice from *without*—how it should respond to the voice; and the light of conscience, thus resuscitated and restored, should meet and be in harmony with the external light that has awakened it. But still the question recurs, who lifted that voice at the first; and whence, or in what quarter, did the light arise? Both in the Islands of the South Sea, and in the North American wilderness—large portions of the territory have been reclaimed; and the men formerly of savage life, whose consciences had lain in a state of dormancy and delusion from time immemorial, are now awake to the pure morality of the Gospel—not however in virtue of a light that sprung up among themselves, but of a light brought to them by missionaries from afar. Thus it is, we historically know, that the local darkness in every particular country of the world has been dissipated—by a visitation from abroad, by a movement from some region of light to this region of barbarism. This gives a sort of experimental solution to the question—whence did light break in upon the world at the first; or at the period of its universal darkness, when that pure and perfect system of morality, the introduction of which requires to be accounted for, was nowhere to be found—how and from what quarter, must it not have been from beyond the world, that the invasion was first made?* "When darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people,

* The first origin of civilization in the world is a controversy charged with principle. If history, which it seems to do, countenance or confirm the assertion that it never arose spontaneously in any nation—this points strongly to the conclusion of a primary revelation.

the Lord," it is said, "shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee." "When the people which sat in darkness saw great light, when on them which sat in the region and shadow of death the light shone"—did it spring up from the earth itself, or was it a supernal light which shone over them? Might it not have been a super-human light, although it met with a reflection in human bosoms? Might it not have been a super-human voice that first gave utterance to those lessons of highest virtue, although it called forth a response and an echo from the consciences of men?

6. It might help us to pronounce on this question all the more confidently, if we look to the state of the Jews at the time of our Saviour—to their exclusive, their inveterately national principle, and contrast it with the more generous and expansive principle of our own Christianity—the one being obviously a system for a nation, the other as obviously a system for the species. Who, it may be repeated, could be the first author of such an enlargement? It follows not from any distinction of ours between the ethics and the objects of revelation, that, however competent for humanity to own the lesson, it was therefore competent for humanity to have framed it—and, more especially, cumbered, as the universal mind of society then was, by the weight of those prejudices which it was called upon to renounce. The light which appears in the very midst of this darkness, could not, we apprehend, have been originated there. In the history of the apostles themselves, we recognize the slowness and the extreme difficulty of its

reception, by a merely Jewish understanding—which, though at length brought to acquiesce in the system, could never have devised it. In the very nature of that system, and more especially when taken in connexion with the circumstances in which it arose, we have an internal evidence for the divinity of its origin. To teach that which is not only repugnant to the taste, but at variance with all the hereditary and long established notions of society—to have germinated, in the heart of a dark and narrow region, a system of morality, that conflicted at the time with all which was immediately around it, but now receives the homage of every enlightened and well-exercised spirit in Christendom—such a phenomenon closely approximates to a miracle, or rather possesses all the characters of an event as extraordinary. If to do that which is beyond human strength be a miracle of power, and to prophesy that which is beyond human foresight be a miracle of knowledge—then for a carpenter of Galilee to have taught, or for fishermen of Galilee to have promulgated that which was beyond human discovery, and surely beyond all the means and likelihoods of a discovery by them, this may well be termed a miracle of science or a miracle of sentiment.

7. This conclusion is greatly strengthened, when we attend in detail to the moralities of the Gospel—and, more especially, to those of its original moralities which may be regarded in the light of a protest against, not merely the universal practice, but till then the universal sense and feelings of mankind. Its prescribed love of enemies—its law

of universal purity, extending to the imaginations of the heart as well as to the overt acts of the history—its moral estimation of the superiority which lies in the desires and purposes of the inner, over the deeds and observations of the outer man—its equal and diffusive benevolence, without the abjuration at the same time of those relative sympathies which bind together the members of the same family—its high standard of charity, the love of one's neighbour as one's self; and withal, the extension of this neighbourhood so as to embrace the men of other climes and other countries than our own, embracing all in fact as we have the opportunity—its respect for rank and yet the honour in which it requires us to hold all men, so as to maintain unbroken the distinctions of civil life while it dignifies and exalts the very humblest of the species—the equal estimation in which it holds rich and poor on the high scale of immortality, and yet the homage which it pays to nobility and office, giving to this world's authority all its prerogatives while reserving for the objects and interests of another world all their immeasurable value—its self-denial—its profound humility and self-abasement—its renunciation of pleasure and ambition and vanity—its walk of faith rather than of sight—its just comparison of the magnitude of time with that of eternity—above all, its entire subordination to God whom it teaches us supremely to love and implicitly to obey—These are the leading characteristics of the morality of the Gospel, new to the world at the time of its publication, however fitted to recommend itself to the moral nature, not

extinct though under obliteration, given to men at the first and coeval with the species. And not only is this the morality which most approves itself to the calm and enlightened judgment of men, but, in act and in experience, is it found to be the best for the happiness of the world—a regimen of peace and charity and righteousness that of itself would turn earth into heaven; and when once universal, which it is its obvious tendency at length to become, then, in the great and glorious renovation that ensues, the brightest visions of prophecy will be fully realized. The same gospel which gladdens every heart and every family that it enters, would turn the dwelling-place of every nation whom it christianizes into a gladsome land; and, when once commensurate with the globe and of complete operation on all who live in it, it would revive and regenerate the whole earth. Other codes and other constitutions have been framed for the separate countries of the world, and they tell the wisdom of their respective but earthly legislators; but this, in its characters alike of goodness and of greatness, and withal of boundless application, obviously announces itself as the code of humanity—and bespeaks the comprehensive wisdom of Him, who, devising for all times and for all people, is the Legislator of the species. It is not the workmanship of a few peasants in Judea. The perfection of its moral characteristics, the greatness and perpetuity of its results—both speak to us of a different fountain-head, and decisively point to us the celestial origin whence it must have sprung.

8. But beside these more general attributes which belong to the morality of the New Testament, there are certain tests of exceeding delicacy which serve to mark the discrimination of its Author—the profoundness of His wisdom, and never more than when exemplified in cases of actual occurrence. The first specimen of this which offers itself to our recollection, is the occasion, when an expensive ointment was poured on the head of the Saviour, and Judas remonstrated because of that being wasted, which might have been sold and its price given to the poor. If there be one characteristic of the Gospel more prominent than another, it is the tenderness of its care and consideration for the poor—not in the form however of a headlong affection, but subject, as every other affection ought to be under a system not of moral feeling alone but of moral tuition, to the qualifications of wisdom and principle. Our Saviour vindicates the application that was made of the precious ointment; and thus lets us know that there are other impulses beside compassion for the poor, which, in their right place and on fitting occasions, should in their turn be obeyed. And an expression of reverence and respect for a divine messenger was one of these occasions. There are certain short-sighted philanthropists who would set up the plea of humanity to the poor in opposition to every cause; and who, under the guise perhaps the reality of a sympathetic regard for them, would lay an arrest on other good works, not only of more urgent principle and necessity at the time, but ten-fold more beneficial in point of effect. It

is thus that the expenses, even the most needful expenses of Christianity have been looked to with an evil eye; and not only would the decency, still more the dignity, of its temple services be grudged for the reason alleged by him who betrayed its author—but, on the same ground too, have we heard both the cost of religious education for our families at home, and the cost of a missionary apparatus for the people abroad, made alike the subjects of a most virulent declamation. And there are other expenses beside those which subserve the well-being of the soul, that relief for the wants of the body ought not to supersede—the expense of justice—the expense of government—the expense even of upholding in becoming state and splendour the offices of magistracy—all which, as connected with right sentiment as well as the real interests of human society, would seem to be warranted by this example of our Saviour—even in the face of that exclusive preference for the poor which some would allege in argument for doing them away. Little have they reflected on the ruinous effect, on the fatal certainty, wherewith it would extend and sorely aggravate the poverty of our land—were the whole wealth of the country turned into one undiverted and undivided stream towards the object of relieving it. And it marks we have often thought, not only a sound discrimination on the part of our first christian teachers, but their wisdom, the reach and comprehensiveness of their wisdom in the foresight of consequences—that, while every positive sanction is given by them to the virtue of liberality, they have not left it

unassociated with the prudence and the principle by which all its exercises ought to be guarded. The refusal of the twelve apostles to continue their services in the distribution of the common fund for the poor, and that because of the better services by which they were occupied, evince, not their disinterestedness alone, but their enlightened judgment, in that they thought it a far higher walk of benevolence to instruct the poor than to relieve them. In striking and remarkable contrast with this is the conduct of Paul—who, while his brethren in the ministry refused to join in the work of distribution, because of its encroachment on the peculiar business of their Apostleship, he made large encroachment thereupon, by mixing with the labours of an Apostle the labours of a tent-maker, and so working with his own hands rather than that he should be burdensome. And this he did, we are told, that he might be an example to others, in being able to say that with his own hands he had ministered to his own necessities. There are some who appear to look on alms-giving as the highest exercise of charity; but here we are most impressively told, that a higher charity still is to teach the people to be independent of alms-giving. The same lesson is reiterated by Paul in his correspondence with the churches. "If any refuse to work neither should he eat." "If any provide not for his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." Nothing can be more obvious than his contempt for money, or rather, his contempt for the sordid affection of covetousness—when he urges on every possessor

of wealth its best and most rightful application, whether at one time for the relief of the poor saints, or at another for the expenses of the ministry of the Gospel. But there is withal so much of manly sense, and so little of weak sentimentalism —such an equal and impartial dealing with all ranks, charging the rich that they should be ready to distribute and willing to communicate, charging the poor to be industrious and contented and if possible independent of charity—such a care lest his infant society should suffer from the contaminations of that hypocrisy which would "make a gain of godliness"—such a preference for that system of helping the poor, which teaches them, by their own exertions and economy and good conduct, to help themselves—in a word, along with the tenderness, the undoubted feeling which prompted his benevolence, such a power and predominance of wholesome judgment in all his ministrations of it—as bespeaks, not only the enlightened moralist, but the enlightened political economist also. In the directions given by him, for the management of the pauperism of these days, there is the profoundest insight, both into motives and consequences—insomuch, that, from the epistles which he has left behind him, we might draw a system of rules and principles, which, though the product of so early and rude an age, might not only serve for the guidance of particular churches, but is of best possible adaptation to the general and complicated society of modern times. This adaptation is of itself an argument for the wisdom of Christianity; and it amounts to a miracle, when

we connect it with the first teachers of Christianity, and think of a wisdom so singular so original, in the mind, whether of the tent-maker of Tarsus or of the fishermen of Galilee.

9. But in these days there occurred questions of still greater perplexity, in the solution of which Paul discovers a sagacity and a soundness of principle still more marvellous. We would instance his deliverance on marriage,* which he permits as an indulgence, but prescribes not as a duty—a sentence in which many of our household moralists, and many even of those economists who devise for the well-being not of a family but of a kingdom at large, would not altogether sympathize. We would instance also his sound decision on the question of slavery,†—unlike, we do think, to the headlong the precipitate zeal of many modern philanthropists, when he enjoins on the children of a hapless servitude, both respect for their masters, and an acquiescence in their state, but a preference withal for a state of enlargement, which, when it may be had, he tells them to "use it rather." But on no occasion does he evince a wisdom that looks more like the wisdom of inspiration, than in his treatment of certain peculiar questions which arose from the admission of the Gentiles into the Church of Christ, and their consequent union with the Jews in one and the same society. There is nothing to be more admired in Paul than the skill, even the dexterity, wherewith he unravels the casuistry of these questions—not of broad and obvious principle,

* 1 Cor. vii. 7, 17, 28, 32—35. † 1 Cor. vii. 21—24.

but all the more delicate and difficult of management, that they related altogether to certain minuter observances of meats and ceremonies and days. It is impossible to withhold our homage from the superior and enlightened way in which the Apostle treats these questions of indifferency with the command of a master, whose own conscience had strength and enlargement enough for either alternative—but, at the same time, with the tenderness of a fellow Christian which prompted the utmost respect and forbearance for the scrupulosities of other and weaker men. He had a difficult part to act between Jews and Christians, in being all things to all men—not, it is quite palpable, for any end of selfishness, but for the sake of the furtherance of the Gospel. It is thus that he who fought so manfully for the exemptions and privileges of his Gentile converts, would not himself eat flesh while the world standeth, if it wounded the conscientious prejudices of a brother or made him to offend. In the exercise of his apostolic wisdom, he was called upon to give sentence on many of these points of lesser observation; but he always did it so as to sustain Christianity in all its characters of greatness, to vindicate and manifest it as being a religion not of points, but of principles. And accordingly, when he recommended compliance in these matters of insignificance, he did it on a clear principle—the principle of charity. And when he contended for liberty it was on a principle alike clear—even that of an enlightened piety which holds the obedience of the heart, as consisting of love to God and man, to be the alone

indispensable obedience. If one regarded a day, enough if he regarded it unto the Lord. If another regarded not the day, enough if to the Lord he did not regard it. We have long thought that there is an identity of principle between these solutions of the Apostle, and the solutions which should be given now on certain indeterminate and not very determinable questions, that exercise, and often agitate and perplex, the minds of Christians in the present day. We mean those questions which respect the precise style and circumstantials of Sabbath observation, as well as the precise degree in which the true disciples of Christianity might externally associate with the world or take part in its companies and amusements. It were well to irradiate all these topics with the light of great and unquestionable principle—that, instead of degrading Christianity into a system of petty exactions urged with senseless and intolerant dogmatism, it might sustain throughout the character of that wisdom which is justified "of its children." Now Paul accomplished this service in his wise and right adjustment of the controversies of that period. He both accommodated the Jews to the uttermost possibility, yet rescued the Gospel from the littleness, the puerility of narrow and illiberal Judaism. When men pass from one extreme to another, they betray, in general, a like unqualified vehemence in both. But when Paul, brought up in the straitest of the sect of the Pharisees, passed from this yoke of bondage to the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free, he was not transported thereby into any unbridled or unmanageable ardour of this

sort. He partitioned the matter aright between the prejudices of the old and the privileges of the new economy; and the utterance of his temperate yet decided judgments, while it bespeaks the enlargement, bespeaks also the guidance and the restraints of inspiration.

10. This reasoning might be prosecuted further. Other examples might be given in detail, of high wisdom and principle, not humanly to be expected in the state and circumstances of the Apostles—and which, therefore, as bordering on the miraculous, or perhaps as fully realizing this character, might well be proposed as distinct credentials for the divinity of the New Testament. But the morality of the gospel might be viewed in another light, than merely as an exhibition on the part of its messengers—approving themselves to be singularly, and perhaps, supernaturally gifted men. It might be viewed in immediate connexion with God—or held as a demonstration, at least as a likelihood of having proceeded from Him, with whose character it is in such full and marvellous accordance. For that system of virtue which recommends itself to the consciences of men, must also recommend itself to their notions of the Godhead. The chief argument of nature, as we have already attempted to prove, for the character of the Divinity, is the character of that law which has been graven by His own hands on the tablet of our moral nature. That to which we do homage in the system of virtue, is also that to which we do homage in God as the living exemplar of it—and on the principle that Himself must be adorned by

the virtues which He has taught us to admire. It is thus that we personify the ethical system into a Being; or pass from the character of the law to the character of the Lawgiver. We fully esteem and accredit God as author of the law of conscience; and should it correspond with the law of a profest revelation, more especially if it be a revelation by which the conscience itself has been greatly enlightened and enlarged, do we recognise the probability at least if not the certainty of its having come from God.

11. But we can imagine more than this. We can imagine a reader of the Bible to be visited with the resistless yet legitimate conviction, amounting to a strongly felt and immediate sense that God has spoken to him there—insomuch that he feels himself to be in as direct correspondence with God uttering His own words to him, as with an earthly friend, when engaged in the perusal of a letter which he knows to be the authentic production of him from whom it professes to have come. It may be difficult to convince those who have never thus been visited by any such direct or satisfying revelation, that there is no fancy or fanatical illusion in the confidence of those who profess to have been made the subjects of it. And yet they may be helped to conceive aright of it by certain illustrations. Those Jews who heard our Saviour and testified that He spake as one having authority, had at first hand an argument for His divine mission which they could not adequately survey or explain the grounds of to another. The officers of the Sanhedrim who were sent to apprehend Jesus yet refrained from touching Him, "because," as they

reported, "never man spake like this man," had also an evidence, which, however powerfully and warrantably felt in their own minds, they could not by any statement pass entire into the minds of other men. The centurion who was present at the crucifixion of the Saviour, and who from what he heard and saw of the tone and aspect and manner of the divine sufferer, testified that surely this was the Son of God—may have received, through the vehicle of his senses, a deep and a just persuasion, which yet by no testimony of his could be borne with full effect, and so as to give the same persuasion to those who were distant from the scene. And, in like manner, the men who were not able to resist the spirit and the wisdom wherewith Stephen spake, may have felt a great deal more than they could tell—yet not a groundless or imaginative feeling, but a rightful impression, which it would have been well if they had acted on, that he spake with the truth and authority of an inspired man. In all these cases, we admit the possibility of such tokens having been exhibited, as might give to the parties who were present a strong and intimate persuasion, not the less solid, that it was only felt by themselves and incommunicable to others. The solitary visitant of some desert and before unexplored island, has as good reason for believing in the reality of the scenes and spectacles before him, though no other eyes ever witnessed them but his own. And so too, in the person of a celestial messenger, there might, for aught we know, be such real though indescribable symptoms of the character wherewith he is invested—such undoubted

signatures of wisdom and authority and truth—such a thorough aspect of sacredness—such traits of a divinity in every look and every utterance—that, though not capable of being made the subject of a public argument, or of being reported to the satisfaction of others, might nevertheless awaken a most honest and homefelt and withal sound conviction in the hearts of those who were the witnesses of such a present and personal manifestation, and who themselves saw with their eyes and heard with their ears, what they could not make other understandings than their own to conceive.

12. Now the question is, whether those characters of truth and of power, which we now imagine to have been in the oral testimony, might not have been transplanted into the written testimony—or whether that palpable evidence embodied in the personal history, and in the words of our Saviour as He spake them upon earth, and of which the hearers took immediate cognizance, might not be fixed and substantiated in the Bible that He left behind him, and be there taken immediate cognizance of by the readers of the bible. Certain it is, that the *prima facie* evidence, the first aspect of that verisimilitude which lies in the obvious sacredness and honesty of Scripture, is greatly brightened and enhanced by our intent and our prolonged regards to it. The man who devotes himself in the spirit of a thorough moral earnestness to the perusal of Scripture, feels a growing homage in his heart to the sanctity and the majesty and the authority which beam upon him from its pages—and in more conspicuous light, and with more commanding

effect, the longer that this holy exercise is persevered in. And the question recurs—might not this growing probability grow into a complete and irresistible certainty at the last? Might not the verisimilitude ripen and be confirmed into the full assurance of a verity? If in the course of actual experience it be found, that we do meet with daily accessions to this evidence—how are we to know that there is not as much of the evidence in reserve, as shall at length overpower the mind into a settled yet sound conviction, that verily God is in the Bible of a truth? It is no condemnation of this evidence, that, only seen by those who have thus reached their way to it, it has not yet come within the observation of others who are behind them, who have not given the same serious and sustained attention to the Bible, or not so much made it the book of their anxious and repeated perusals—nor their right understanding of the book, the subject of their devoutest prayers. It is true, the resulting evidence is of that personal and peculiar quality, which cannot be translated in all its proper force and clearness into the mind of another—yet may it be a good and a solid evidence notwithstanding—as much so as the ocular evidence for the reality of some isolated spot which I alone have been admitted to see, and which no human eyes but my own have ever once beheld. The evidence is not at all weakened by this monopoly. To myself it is every way as satisfying and strong as if thousands shared in it. At least, irrespective of them, the conviction on my own separate and independent view of the object of the question, may have been so perfect,

as to require no additions. Yet, if not an addition, there is at least a pleasing harmony in the experience of men, who have been admitted to the view along with me. We might be strengthened and confirmed by our mutual assurance of a reality in things unknown to all but ourselves, and which to the generality of the world abide in deepest secrecy. And such too the sympathy, such the confirmation felt by "the peculiar people," in their converse with each other. They are a chosen generation, and have been translated out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel —each having the witness within himself, yet all prizing the discovery, when, on talking one with another, they find the consistency and the oneness of a common manifestation.

13. No explanation of this evidence will *convince* the uninitiated. But it may assist them to conceive of it—nay to acquiesce in its possibility, perhaps even in its probability, or still farther in its truth —though a truth which they individually have not been permitted to behold. Yet we see not how they can approximate to the true understanding of it, unless they are told of the revelation made to the mind of man by the Spirit of God—although it be a revelation to which they are yet strangers. Yet they cannot fail to have read the intimations of such a process in the Bible—of "men translated out of darkness into marvellous light"—of "things hidden from the wise and the prudent yet revealed unto babes"—of the "day dawning, and the day-star arising in the hearts of those who were making diligent search after the doctrine of

their salvation"—of "eyes being opened to behold the marvellous light contained in God's law"—and finally, of "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shining in the hearts of men and giving them the light of His own glory in the face of Jesus Christ." There may be to them a felt mysticism in these various passages—yet they are the passages of a book, the argumentative evidence of which many of them have studied and been satisfied therewith. This higher, this transcendental evidence, they may not have shared in. Yet perhaps some general notion could be given of it—and even they might be taught in part to apprehend what they have not yet appropriated.

14. It is of capital importance for those who are strangers to this evidence, and perhaps are suspicious of its fanaticism and folly—it is of capital importance for them to be told, that the Spirit, in revealing truth to the mind, reveals only the things which are contained in scripture. He tells us, not of the things which are out of the Bible; but he tells us of the things that are in the Bible. He sheds a light on the pages of the Word. He opens the understandings of men; but it is to understand the Scriptures. He opens their eyes; but it is to behold the things contained in this book. The design of His internal revelation, is to make the things of the external revelation visible. They are the previous objective realities of scripture in which he deals; and, though His be in one respect a new revelation, yet the great purpose of it is to cast a light over the stable and independent truths of the old revelation. When

He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us, He but shows us the things of Scripture, or the things which the Scripture tells of Christ. Each man on whom He operates is made the subject of a distinct manifestation; yet He does not tell a different Christianity to each, but the same Christianity to all—for the Christianity which He has graven on the hearts of those to whom He has imparted the gift of spiritual discernment, is a precise transcript of the Christianity previously graven on the pages of the New Testament. At this rate there might be no fancy, no fluctuation, in the Christianity of these men—for they are all made to behold the same things; and both the doctrine which they believe, and the morality which they are taught to practise, may be tried by a reference to the same standard—even the standard of the law and of the testimony. And scripture is still the abiding test-book of their Christianity—for, whatever the pretensions of these men, if they speak not according to the things that are written in this book, there is no truth in them. And as there is nothing precarious in their doctrine, neither is there aught precarious in the evidence upon which they have received it. One can imagine a hundred-fold strength given to the faculty of distant vision—on which the features of a remote landscape, now beyond the perception of the natural eye, might start into sure and satisfying revelation; and what we should thus behold would not be an illusion, but a solid reality, and on the best of all evidence, even that of ocular demonstration. And one can also imagine a hundred-fold

strength given to the faculty of minute or microscopic vision—on which, the arcana of a hidden region, now beneath the perception of the natural eye would come into view, and still on the same evidence of ocular demonstration. And thus too we might imagine of the Spirit of God, whom it is not for us to limit as if we indeed comprehended the whole of His way—that He gives to the mind of the inquirer, to the eye of his intellect, a powerful and penetrating discernment into the matters of Scripture; and that he is made in consequence to behold a character of majesty and sacredness, and to hear a voice of authority which tells him irresistibly of God. Whether such signatures of the Godhead as these be actually in Scripture, or what the things to be discerned are which lie in reserve for our discernment there, can only be told by him who has the faculty of discernment, not by him who wants it—in like manner as the objects of a telescopic region can only be told by him who has the enlarged vision of the telescope, not by him who possesses but the limited vision of the natural eye. Certain it is, that if such tokens of the divinity exist in the Bible, and it is by an augmentation in the visual faculties of the mind that we are enabled to behold them—there might be as much reason and philosophy in the convictions of those by whom the truth as it is in Jesus is spiritually discerned, as there is in the confidence of the astronomer, when he tells of the satellites of Jupiter; or of the naturalist, when he tells of the atoms and animalcules that are beneath the ken of our unaided eyesight. The reader of the

Bible, when thus gifted, might have as legitimate an assurance of the new meaning he is now made to behold—as, with only his old faculties, he had of the mind or meaning of any ordinary author.* The very process whereof he is conscious in his own mind, and by which he has been ushered into this new and impressive manifestation of the Deity, adds a peculiar evidence of its own to that of the outward manifestation itself; and rivets still more the conviction, that the same God, who thus supernaturally teaches him to understand this Bible, is verily in the Bible of a truth.

15. It is thus that the veriest babe in natural knowledge might be made to perceive God in the scriptures, and there be revealed to him things hidden from the wise and the prudent.† When, in virtue of this spiritual revelation, the scales are made to fall from his eyes—he might recognize, in the sentences which the Bible gives forth, the divinity of Him who utters them, directly announcing itself to be the voice of God clothed in majesty. Yet he is informed of nothing but what the word tells him; but to his mind, now opened and clarified, it tells what it never told before; and he can now say with him in the Gospel whom a miracle had cured, "I was once blind but now I see." In the whole of this wondrous record, from first to last, from the Patriarchs and Prophets of the Old to the

* "We cannot conceive how reason should be prejudiced by the advancement of the rational faculties of our souls with respect unto their exercise toward their proper objects; which is all we assign unto the work of the Holy Spirit in this matter."—*Dr. Owen on the Spirit.*

† Matt. xi. 25.

Apostles of the New Testament; he descries throughout, the purity and the wisdom and the sustained loftiness of the Godhead. As in personal converse we might recognize at once both the dignity and wisdom of him to whose spoken language we are at the time giving ear—so, in the perusal of written language, the same attributes might be discernible; and be so enhanced as to impress on the awakened reader, the sense and the rightful conviction that God Himself had broken silence. He feels it to be the language not of earth, but of Heaven's august sanctuary. The evidence of this in the Bible beams direct upon him from its own pages; and, however difficult or perhaps incapable of analysis it may be, this hinders not its being his rational and well-grounded faith—when to him the reading of Scripture is an act of felt and immediate fellowship with God.

16. This evidence, however distinctly felt by him who is the subject of it or who has had the experience of its manifestation, it is extremely difficult to speak of discursively or to the satisfaction of others. Dr. Owen, in his treatise on "the divine original authority self-evidencing light and power of the scriptures, with an answer to that inquiry how we know the scriptures to be the word of God," has with all his efforts failed, we think, in describing to others, what we have no doubt he genuinely experienced himself—and so leaves the subject in great obscurity. Our own Halyburton, whose book on Deism in reply to Lord Herbert,*

* "Natural Religion insufficient, and Revealed necessary to Man's happiness in his present state; or a rational inquiry into

and whose little tract, or "Essay concerning the Nature of Faith, or the grounds upon which it assents to the Scriptures," place him in a high rank among our philosophical theologians—is the most successful expounder of it whom we have yet met with. In this latter performance, the running title of which is an "Essay concerning the Reason of Faith," he controverts the opinion of the rationalists on this subject, and especially of Mr. Locke in his book on the Human Understanding. The following are a few extracts:—"This impress, those characters, prints and vestiges of the infinite perfections of the Deity, that unavoidably must be allowed to be stamp'd on, and shine, not merely or only or principally in the matter, but in that as spoken or written, and in the writings or words, in their style, the spirit running through them, the scope, tendency, &c. This Θεοπρεπεια or God-becoming impress of majesty, sovereignty, omniscience, independence, holiness, justice, goodness, wisdom, and power, is not only a sufficient and real, but in very deed, the greatest objective light and evidence imaginable. And where one has an understanding given to know him that is true, and is made thereby to entertain any suitable notion of the Deity, upon intuition of this objective evidence, without waiting to reason on the matter, his assent will be carried, and unavoidably determined to rest on it as the highest ground of assurance.

the principles of the Modern Deists, &c.;" by the Rev. Thomas Halyburton, Professor of Divinity in the University of St. Andrew's. He flourished at the beginning of the last century; and is author of a most valuable practical work—"The Great Concern."

And this assent founded on this impress of the Deity in his own word, is indeed an assent of the highest degree. And thus far faith resembles our intuitive knowledge, with this difference, not as to the manner of the mind's acting, but as to the ability whence it acts; that in our intuitive knowledge, as Mr. Locke, and those of his opinion, restricts it, the evidence or objective light is such as not only is immediately without reasoning discern'd, but such as lies open to, and is discernible by our understandings, without any subjective light, any work of the Spirit of God either repairing disabled faculties, or elevating and guiding them to the due observation, or fixing their attention, or freeing their minds of the power and present influence of aversion of will, disorder of affections and prejudices that obstruct the discerning power. Whereas this is really necessary in this case, and though the objective evidence is great, and still the same; yet according to the greater or lesser degree of this assistance, our assent must be stronger or weaker, more fixed or wavering.

"When this objective evidence is actually observant to, and under the view of the mind thus enabled, disposed, and assisted, there doth arise from it, and there is made by it, an Impression on the whole soul corresponding thereto. The beaming of God's sovereign authority awes conscience. The piercing evidence of his omniscience increases that regard, the view of goodness, mercy, love, and grace operates on the will, and leaves a relish on the affections, and this truly resembles sensible evidence, tho' it is of spiritual things, and of a

spiritual nature; nor is it, as it is evidence, inferiour to, but upon many accounts preferable to that which results from the impression made by sensible objects. And this, as was observ'd of the former, is also greater or less, according and in proportion unto the view we have of that objective light above-mentioned. This self-evidencing power is a resultancy from, and in degree keeps pace with that self-evidencing light."

"This light whereby the written Word evidences itself unto the minds of those who have spiritual ears to hear and apply them, is nothing else, save the impress of the majesty, truth, omniscience, wisdom, holiness, justice, grace, mercy, and authority of God, stamped upon the scriptures by the Holy Ghost, and beaming or shining into the minds, of such persons upon their hearing or perusal, and affecting them with a sense of these perfections, both in what is spoken, and in the majestick and God-becoming way of speaking: they speak as never man spake; the matter spoken, and the manner of speaking, has a greatness discernible by a spiritual understanding, that satisfies it fully, that God is the speaker. And all the impressions of God's wisdom, faithfulness, omniscience, and majesty that are stamped upon the matter contain'd in the scriptures being convey'd only by the Word, do join the impressions that are upon the Word, and strengthen the evidence they give of their divine original, since these impressions do not otherwise appear to our minds, or affect them, than by the Word. The Word by a God-becoming manifestation of the truth, that scorns all these

little and mean arts of insinuation, by fair and enticing words; and artificially dress'd-up argumentations, with other the like confessions of human weakness, that are in all humane writings, commends itself to the conscience, dives into the souls of men, into all the secret recesses of their hearts, guides, teaches, directs, determines, and judges in them, and upon them, in the name, majesty and authority of God. And when it enters thus into the soul, it fills it with the light of the glory of the beamings of those perfections upon it; whereby it is made to cry out, 'The voice of God, and not of man.'"

17. But we can imagine certain minds to be unsettled, if not repelled, by the whole of this contemplation. Many may feel that, instead of bringing the subject nearer, it has in truth distanced them from Christianity. They could apprehend the rational evidence for the truth of the gospel; and perhaps rejoiced as they were trying the strength of it, in the solidity of that ground upon which they were standing. But they have no taste and no understanding for this spiritual evidence—nor can they at all sympathize with those men of another conformation who seem regaled, in the study of it, as if by a splendour and a richness to them incomprehensible. To them it appears like the substitution of an imaginary for a real basis—the quitting of a firm vantage-ground, with no other compensation for the loss of it, than a certain visionary and viewless mysticism in its place. They refuse, therefore, to enter on this impracticable region; or to entertain at all that shadowy

argument which, to the eye of their intellect, has exceedingly bedimmed the question, and put it on an elevation, which, be it sound or be it fanciful, they regard as being hopelessly and inaccessibly above them. And so they incline to keep by the position which they at present occupy, and to attempt nothing higher—leaving this adventurous flight to others, but satisfied themselves with the more palpable reasonings of Leslie and Littleton and Butler and Lardner and Paley.

18. Our first reply to this is, that they do not set aside the rational, when they enter on the consideration of the spiritual evidence, or when they attempt in their own persons to realise it. They need not forego a single advantage which they have gained. The spiritual evidence does not darken or cast an uncertainty over the rational evidence—no more unsettles, for example, the historical argument for the truth of the Christian religion, than it unsettles any of the demonstrations of geometry. If by this new opening they do not feel themselves led forward, and so as to make a nearer approximation to the truth than before—they most assuredly are not thrown back by it. The argument from prophecy does not obscure the argument from miracles; and as little does the moral or spiritual evidence which we are now attempting to unfold, obscure either the one or the other of these arguments. The validity of one species of reasoning does not depend on the validity of another species which is altogether distinct from it. The more transcendental light of which we have just spoken, leaves all the other and lesser lights precisely

where it found them. They discharge the same function as heretofore. The pleadings of the very authors on the deistical controversy, whom we have quoted remain as good as ever; and, if we are not admitted by them into the glories of the inner temple, they one and all of them have at least strengthened the bulwarks of the faith.

19. But moreover. What ought to abate the formidableness of this evidence (regarded by them as if it were a secret of free-masonry and only for the initiated) and make it less repulsive in their eyes, is, that, however lofty and remote from every present view and vision of theirs, there is a series of patent and practicable steps by which they and all others might be led to the perception of it. There is one most obvious principle, clear of all mysticism, and which they will not refuse—that if once convinced on rational, or on any evidence, of the Bible being indeed a message from the God of heaven, it is their urgent, their imperative duty to read that Bible; or, after having studied and been satisfied with the credentials of the book, now to explore with all docility and labour the contents of the book. There is another principle of an equally elementary character which they cannot refuse to admit, and should not refuse to act upon—that, however strange and transcendental the light of spiritual Christianity may appear in their eyes, they have at least a light of conscience within them which they are bound to follow, so as to accompany their devout and diligent reading of the Scriptures with the most faithful observation of all which this inward monitor tells them to be right, and as

scrupulous an avoidance of all which it tells them to be wrong. Thus far they walk on a plain path; and there is but one suggestion more, which, if theirs be indeed an honest respect for the authority of scripture (as sufficiently vindicated to their apprehension on the ground of its argumentative and literary evidence alone) they will not shrink from—and that is, the obligation as well as the efficacy of prayer, and of prayer for other and higher manifestations of the truth than they have yet been permitted to enjoy. They surely do not imagine such to be the fulness and perfection of their knowledge, that there is no room in their minds for any further enlargement or further illumination. Let us then suppose them to have actually entered on this process—a most careful perusal of His word—a most careful and conscientious doing of His will as far as is known to them—and withal, most earnest prayer for the visitation of that light which they have not yet reached, but now most honestly aspire after. We think that the truth of scripture may be perilled on the result of such an enterprise; and that, because its own declarations will either be verified or disproved by it. For here are men willing to do the will of God; let us see whether they will not be made to know of Christ's doctrine that it is of God.* Here are men keeping the sayings of the Saviour; let us see whether He will not manifest himself to them in such a way as He doeth not unto the world.† Here are men making a conscientious use of the light they have;

* John vii. 17. † John xiv. 21.

and let us see whether in their history there will not be the fulfilment of the saying, that to him who hath more shall be given.* Here are men giving earnest heed to the word; let us see whether the promise will not be accomplished, that the day shall dawn and the day-star arise in their hearts.† Here are men seeking intently, and with all earnestness seeking; let us see whether or not the declaration of the Saviour will come to pass, he that seeketh findeth.‡ Here are men, while in the busy and anxious pursuit of that truth which is unto salvation, conforming their walk as far as in them lies to all the lessons of piety and righteousness; let us see whether the glorious assurance will not be realized, that to him who ordereth his conversation aright I will show my salvation.§ Such seems then to be the economy of the Gospel. It has an incipient day of small things,‖ which, if not despised but prosecuted aright, will terminate in a day of large and lofty manifestations. It takes its outset from the plainest biddings of conscience. It has its consummation in the things of the Spirit of God, which the natural man cannot receive, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. It begins with that which all may apprehend, and all may act upon. It ends with that which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive; but which God reveals by His Spirit even by the Holy Ghost given to those who obey him.¶ He is quenched, He is grieved, He is resisted by our despite of

* Matt. xxv. 29. † 2 Pet. i. 19. ‡ Matt. vii. 8. § Psalm l. 23.
‖ Zechariah iv. 10. ¶ 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

Him and of His suggestions—or, which is every way tantamount to this, the despite and disobedience done by us to the suggestions of our own conscience. Were we faithful to the lesser light, the larger would at length shine upon us. Did we hunger and thirst after these higher revelations of the Gospel, then their glory and their fulness would at length be ours. This is the constitution of things. There is a connexion established between disobedience and spiritual desertion—"he who hateth his brother is in darkness."* And there is a connexion between obedience and spiritual discernment—"the path of the upright is like the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."† The every-day virtues of the Gospel form the steps of that ladder, by which we ascend to the mystic glory of its full and finished revelations. The moral is the conductor to the spiritual. Conscientiousness in practice leads to clearness in theology. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him."‡ "He meeteth him that worketh righteousness."§ "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall

* 1 John ii. 11. † Prov. iv. 18. ‡ Psalm xxv. 14. § Isaiah lxiv. 5.

go before thee: the glory of the Lord shall be thy rere-ward."* "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day."†

20. Now this should reconcile men to the alleged mystery of these higher communications, should soften or rather do away their offence and prejudice against it—when Christianity thus consents to be put upon its trial. However inconceivable or inaccessible the glories of its inner temple might be deemed, it is truly a plain and practicable avenue which leads to them. That is no uncertain sound which the trumpet giveth forth, when the Gospel makes its first intimations, and sets those who are obedient to its call on that progressive way, which leads to the discovery of things beyond the ken of nature, and which only a light from the upper sanctuary can make manifest to the soul. It is true that there are things revealed unto babes and hidden from the wise and the prudent; but this is because they want the docility of babes. They have not been initiated into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, because they have not been converted and become as little children.‡ They do not sit to the book of revelation, as Newton did to the book of nature, with the modesty and teachableness of him who felt that he had all to learn. They have been alike unobservant of the wisdom of true philosophy, and the piety of true Christians; and so have renounced not their lofty

* Isaiah lviii. 6—8. † Isaiah lviii. 10. ‡ Matt. xviii. 3.

imaginations, nor brought every thought of their hearts in captivity to the obedience of Scripture.* It is thus that their contempt for the higher mysteries of the Gospel, will be found to resolve itself into contempt for the plainest of its lessons. It tells them how to wait and work for spiritual illumination, yet they did not act—it tells them how to seek for it, yet they did not pray. They admit the authority of the book; but they refuse its sayings. It is because of its rational evidence, that they admit the authority; and it is because they refuse the sayings, that they remain contemptuous and ignorant of its spiritual evidence. They are strangers to that which is recondite, because, traversing even their own principles, they have not made a faithful use of that which is obvious. Theirs will be a palpable condemnation—that the clearest dictates of their own conscience, the clearest intimations of the word acknowledged by themselves to be divine, have been alike disregarded by them.

21. That evidence for Christianity which is seen in the light of the spirit, though called a mystical, is in truth a moral evidence. By all the Scripture testimonies which we have quoted, it is an illumination which begins and brightens onwards along the pathway of a moral obedience—advancing step by step from the lesser to the greater light, but through the conscientious use of the smaller being followed up, under the virtuous administration of the Gospel, by the larger manifestation. When

* 2 Cor. x. 5.

looked to in connexion with God who in every individual case originates the process, it may be regarded as the fruit of His grace and sovereignty. When looked to in connexion with man who undergoes the process, it may be regarded as the fruit of moral earnestness and prayer. Whether viewed in the history or in the results of it, it gives the impress of a thorough moral character to the economy under which we sit—that the fulfilment of duty should thus lead the way to the fuller comprehension of doctrine—or that by the desires and the labours of an honest aspiring conscientiousness, that channel is opened by which the light of heaven is let in upon the soul. The system under which knowledge is thus made to arise in the train of righteousness bespeaks the essential righteousness of its author, and is so far an evidence of its having come from the all-righteous God. But this evidence, grounded on the nature of the process which leads to the spiritual revelation, is distinct from the more latent evidence that lies in the things which are revealed—in the lineaments, now made obvious, of an authority and a sacredness and a wisdom and a truth which serve immediately to announce the Godhead to an awakened and illuminated reader of the Bible. And in the event itself of his being thus awakened, in the fact or the fulfilment that has taken place in the history of his mind, there is a third evidence —as distinct from the two former as the miraculous is from the moral evidence. The event viewed historically, or as an event, has in it indeed somewhat of the character of a miracle—but, to estimate

fully its argumentative force, we must view it not merely in the light of a moral, but of an experimental evidence for the truth of Christianity.*

22. The spiritual evidence of Christianity does not supersede the use or the importance of its rational evidence—which discharges the same function in the revealed, that the incipient light in the minds of all men does in the natural theology. If the first suggestions of conscience respecting a God, lay us under the obligation of entertaining the topic and prolonging our regards to it—so the first evidence that we obtain for the Bible, as a message from God, lays us under the same obligation of pondering its contents, and of making honest and faithful application of them. A larger illumination, in the one case as to the evidence for natural religion, and in the other as to the evidence for the religion of the Gospel, will be the fruit of both these exercises. It is not the historical or the literary evidence for the truth of the Bible which christianizes the philosophical inquirer. But it should lead him to read the Bible, and to go in quest of that evidence by which he is christianized. Neither those credentials of the book which gain the assent of the philosopher, nor that precognition of the book which is taken by the peasant, are able of themselves to work that faith which is unto salvation. They fall short of awakening such a conviction as this in the breast of either—but they form like imperative claims on the attention of both. And it is in the train of this

* See the next Chapter.

attention, earnest and prayerful and persevering, that the effective manifestation comes, by which the soul is turned from darkness unto light; and, as the fruit of this earnest heed to the word of the testimony, the day dawns and the day-star arises in the heart. The evidence lies in the word. It is the entrance of the word which gives light unto the simple. It is the word which is a light unto his feet, and a lamp unto his paths. Whatever originated the attention at the first, however diverse the points from which the peasant and the philosopher have taken their respective departures —both must arrive at the same landing-place, and both must submit to be tutored by the same evidence at the last. The manifestation of the truth unto the conscience is made to each in the same way; and there is a common process by which they arrive at their common Christianity.

CHAPTER III.

On the Experimental Evidence for the Truth of Christianity.

1. The moral may be distinguished from the experimental evidence for the truth of Christianity thus. In the former, we look altogether to that which is objective—for the evidence is elicited by our comparison of one objective thing with another. The moral system contained in the Bible is clearly an objective matter of contemplation—presented to

the mind in an outward volume, and made present to the mind in the act of perusing it. The abstract system, or the system of virtue as regarded according to our own natural and anterior notions of it, may be viewed also in the light of that which is objective —as separate from the mind, and distinct from any of those facts or phenomena of which the mind is the subject. It is true that the system of virtue in the Bible rectifies our own previous notions of it; and, by its enlightening effect upon the conscience, tends to assimilate more closely the ethical system of revelation with the ethical system of our now better instructed human nature. At length, instead of the likeness, we come to feel the identity between these two; but this, instead of lessening the objective character of our contemplation, makes it more singly and strongly objective than before. When we make a study of scripture, we, immediately and without any feeling of comparison, recognize the purity and perfection of those moral characteristics which enter into its ethical system—and so pronounce it worthy of having proceeded from the God, who is at once the fountain and the exemplar of all righteousness.

2. And this objective nature of the things which engage our attention is fully sustained, when, instead of looking to the virtues of scripture as the component parts of its ethical system, we look to them as embodied in the character of the Godhead. There is an evidence grounded on the accordancy which obtains between the representations in the Bible and our own previous notions of the Deity—and still more, when these notions are rectified by

the Bible itself, to the appearance of which book in the world, we indeed owe the now purer and more enlightened theism of modern Europe. Still, when comparing God as set forth in scripture with God as seen in the light of our own minds, we compare the objective with the objective; and this character is if possible enhanced, when, instead of recognizing the likeness, we recognize the identity, and feel immediately on our perusal of scripture that God Himself is speaking to us, or that we are engaged in close and personal correspondence with God. It is when God thus announces Himself as present to us in the Bible, in His own characters of holiness and majesty, that this self-evidencing light is seen in its brightest manifestation. A simple uneducated peasant, when his eyes are opened to behold this, takes up immediately with scripture as a communication from heaven—which viewed altogether objectively by him, and without any reflex view of what passes within himself, makes direct revelation of its own divinity to his soul.

3. But though in the study of the moral evidence, the mind is altogether engaged objectively—it is not so in the study of the experimental evidence. Of the two parts of the tally which are here brought into comparison, the one is objective and the other subjective. It is on the accordancy between the sayings of scripture and the findings of conscience, that this evidence is chiefly founded—between the statements or proposals in the book of revelation on the one hand, and the facts or phenomena of our own felt and familiar nature upon the other. Yet to prepare us fully for a judgment on the

experimental, we must attend to things connected with the moral evidence also. When the Bible, for example, affirms the great moral depravation of the human character—to meet this by an independent judgment of our own, we must be able to pronounce, not only on what man is, but on what man ought to be. In other words, there must be a conscience or moral faculty which takes cognizance of the right and the wrong, as well as a consciousness or faculty of internal observation which enters into the penetralia of our own bosom, and takes cognizance of the desires and the affections and the purposes that have their being and operation there.*

4. That men possess, and that natively and universally, the faculty of conscience, or that faculty which takes cognizance of and makes distinction between the morally good and evil, is palpable to all observation. This faculty or power is in fact met with throughout all the members of the human family. Under all the varieties of light and obscuration, and with allowance for every modification of sentiment—still there is a general sense of right and wrong that is characteristic of our species—a feeling of approval and complacency associated with the former—a feeling of shame and dissatisfaction and remorse associated

* It is unfortunate, that, in the use of language, the terms of conscience and consciousness are not kept as distinct from each other, as are the mental faculties which they express, and the provinces on which it is the part of these faculties respectively to expatiate. Consciousness has been strictly enough appropriated to its legitimate meaning; but conscience has been indiscriminately applied both to questions of right and wrong, and to questions which respect the actual state of one's own character.

with the latter. This peculiarity of our nature obtains in all countries, and among all the conditions of humanity. Whatever the practice may be, there is a certain truth of perception as to the difference between good and evil everywhere. There is a law of rectitude to which in every nation, how degraded soever, a universal homage is yielded by the sensibilities of the heart—however little it may be yielded to by the practical habit of their lives. In a word, there is a morality recognized by all men—imprinting the deepest traces of itself on the vocabulary of every language, and marking the residence of a conscience in every bosom—insomuch that, go to any outcast tribe of wanderers—and, however sunk in barbarism, if we tell them of right and wrong, they will meet the demonstration with responding and intelligent sympathy. We do not speak to them in vocables unknown. There is a common feeling, a common understanding, betwixt us—one ground of fellowship at least, on which the most enlightened missionary from Europe might hold converse with the rudest savages of the desert.

5. But again, this conscience, this sense of morality, does not exist alone in the heart. It is more or less followed up by a certain sense or conception of some rightful sovereign who planted it there. The feeling of a judge within the breast, is in no case altogether apart from the faith of a judge above, who sits as overseer upon the doings, and as arbiter of the destinies of men. The moral sense does not terminate or rest in the mere abstract relations of right or wrong; but is embodied into

the belief of a substantive being, who dispenses the rewards that are due unto the one, and inflicts the penalties that are felt to be due unto the other. It is this which gives rise to the theology of conscience, more quick and powerful than the theology of academic demonstration—not so much an inference from the marks of design and harmony in external nature, as an instant suggestion from what is felt and what is feared within the recesses of our own bosom—because leading by one footstep from the felt supremacy of conscience within, to the feared supremacy of a God, the author of conscience, and who knoweth all things. It is a mistake to imagine of this theology, that it is not universal, or that any degree whether of ignorance or corruption can wholly obliterate it. It was not stifled by the polytheism of Greece and Rome. Neither is it extinct, as may be seen by their invocations to the Great Spirit, among the tribes of the American wilderness. In short, wherever men are to be found, there is the impression at least, of a reigning and a righteous God. When utterance is made of such a Being, even in the darkest places of the earth, they are not startled as if by the sound of a thing unknown. There is a ready coalescence with the theme—and as he speaks of God and sin and vengeance, there is a felt harmony between the conscience of the savage and the sermon of the missionary.

6. But there is a second faculty concerned in this matter of the experimental evidence, even the faculty of internal observation. Conscience, in the sense that we have just used it, is that faculty

by which cognizance is taken of the good or the evil desert of conduct in general. But conscience by the use of language has obtained a meaning more extended than this. It is implicated with the faculty of consciousness; and so is made to take especial cognizance of one's own character, of one's own conduct.* One man is said to speak to the conscience of another, when he speaks to the independent sense or knowledge which the other has of the state of his own heart and his own history. And certain it is, that never do we feel profounder veneration for any wisdom, than for that which searches and scrutinizes among the arcana of one's own nature, and comes to a right discernment thereupon. The man who can pronounce aright upon my character, and accurately read on this inner tablet the lineaments which I know to be graven there—the man who offers to me the picture of what I am; and I behold it to be at all points the faithful reflexion of what I feel myself to be—the man whose voice from without is thus responded to by the echo of conscience or of consciousness within—the man who can awaken this inhabitant of my bosom from his slumbers, and make him all alive to the truth of such a representation as he now perceives but never before adverted to—to such a man we render the homage due to an insight and a sagacity so marvellous. And at length, to border on our argument, this sagacity we might conceive enhanced into a dis-

* We have no doubt that the term is comprehensive of both these senses in scripture—when mention is made of the manifestation of the truth unto the conscience.

cernment supernatural. It might amount to such a divination of the secrets of the heart, as nought but the interposal of the Divinity can explain. It might announce itself to be a higher wisdom than any upon earth, to be wisdom from above—and so draw the very acknowledgement which the first teachers of Christianity drew, to whom when an unlearned hearer listened, he was judged of all and convinced of all—and thus were the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he worshipped God and reported that God was in them of a truth.

7. After these prefatory and general observations on the experimental evidence, we may now resolve it into three leading particulars—viewing it first as an evidence grounded on the accordancy which obtains between what the Bible says we are, and what we find ourselves to be—secondly, as an evidence grounded on the accordancy between what the Bible overtures for our acceptance, and what we feel ourselves to need—and third, or most strictly experimental, as an evidence grounded on the accordancy between what the Bible tells of the events and the changes and the advancements which take place in the mind of an exercised Christian, and what this Christian realizes in his own personal history, in the process which he actually describes, and the transitions from one state and one character to another which he actually undergoes.

8. I. The first thing then that might draw the regards of the inquirer to such a volume, and ultimately draw from him the acknowledgement of

a felt conviction in its divinity, is, the insight which it manifested into the arcana of his own spirit—the perceived accordancy which obtains between what it said that he was, and what he felt himself to be —the marks, wherewith it abounded, of that shrewd and penetrating sagacity, which can pronounce on the mysteries of the human character; and to which testimony from without, there is the echo of a respondent testimony from the conscience which is within us. There is no authorship so interesting as that which holds up to the reader the mirror of his own heart; and no wisdom to which we yield the homage of a readier admiration, than to that which can look through the deeds and the disguises of men. Now it is conceivable, that the volume in question might stand distinguished from all other authorship, by its profounder and more penetrating discernment into all the lurking places of our moral economy—so superior indeed to every thing else of human authorship upon the subject, that, by this superiority alone, it might recommend itself to be superhuman. To the man who can find his way among the penetralia of my bosom, and utter himself aright as to the thoughts and the passions and the purposes that hold the mastery there—to such a man we should readily award the credit of a very high and powerful intelligence. Now one can figure, at least, the proofs of such an intelligence to be so multiplied, as to pass upwards from what we have experienced of the intelligence of a man, to what we conceive of the intelligence of a God. Were a prophet to stand before us, and, laying claim to a heavenly inspiration, were he to divine,

and with unexcepted accuracy, all the thoughts of my heart and all the circumstances of my past history—this miraculous achievement would reconcile us to his pretensions. Now this very power and property of divination, that such a gifted messenger from on high manifests in his oral testimony, he could transfer to the written testimony that he left behind him, for the instruction of distant ages—and thus what we should hold to be a satisfying evidence of his commission, were he alive, and did he address us in person, might be conveyed from his words to his writings, and compose a book which should announce in perpetual characters to all future generations, the high original from which it had descended.

9. A merely human author might recommend himself both to the confidence and the admiration of those who study him, by the reach and the penetration of that sagacity, wherewith he finds his way among the hidden yet the felt and conscious intimacies of the human character. Now this sagacity might be evinced by an authorship that professes to be divine, in a degree so marvellous—there might be so minute and varied and scrupulous an accordancy between its representations of our heart, and the responses given to them by that faculty within, which takes cognizance of its feelings and processes—the voice that is without may be so accurately reflected or echoed back again, by the still small voice that issueth in whispers from the deeply-seated recesses of consciousness—as first to draw our regards towards a volume that holds up to observation such a picture of ourselves;

and finally to decide our reliance upon it, as being indeed a communication that hath proceeded from a higher quarter than from any individual, or any party of individuals within the limits of our species. It is a conclusion, drawn from the correct scrutiny wherewith the author of this book enters among the arcana of the human constitution, and so pronounces of this microcosm within the breast, as to evince a superhuman acquaintance with its laws and its processes. This evidence is founded on the accordancy between what is in the book, and what is in the chamber of our own moral and spiritual economy. Our reading of the volume unfolds to us the one. The faculty of consciousness, awake and enlightened, unfolds to us the other; and the agreement between these two might be spread out and sustained in a way so evidently superhuman, as to evince that he who constructed the volume had a superhuman acquaintance with all the peculiarities and the wants and the phases of that nature to which it constantly refers and for whose benefit it was framed. To come in contact with this evidence, we do not need to range abroad over the walks of a lofty or recondite scholarship. The whole apparatus that seems requisite for the impression of it, is to be in possession of a Bible and of a conscience—and, with the readings of the one, to combine the reflections of the other.

10. There is one most notable example that might be given of this species of accordancy between what the book says that we are—and what we, should our attention be earnestly directed to our-

selves and our consciences be prepared for an enlightened decision, must feel ourselves to be. We refer to the assertion, that is so often repeated throughout the pages of this profest revelation, of man's total and universal depravity. It was a fearful thing, with this high pretence of the christian message to a divine inspiration, it was a fearful thing thus to commit itself to an affirmation, on which it stood liable to be confronted with the experience of one and all of the human species. Had it spoken to us of distant things, in distant and by us unexplored parts of the universe, it might have been safe from all the cross-examinations of those on whom it had made the high demand of their faith and their obedience. Of that remote and lofty region it may have told us many things, without the hazard of any effectual resistance on the part of those who had no contrary experience of their own to oppose it. But when, in addition to things that lie afar, and which it professes to have fetched from the upper sanctuary—it tells us of things that lie within the precincts of our own daily and familiar experience—when, instead of bringing its informations from a land of dimness and mystery, it maketh averment in regard to such facts and phenomena as are accessible to all—more especially, when it ventures on the ground of a man's own heart and history; and proclaims to his face that such is the uniform character of the one, and such has been the uniform style and complexion of the other—when it speaks of that which is so near at hand, and stakes its credit on the affirmation of things within our own bosom, and that we,

therefore, should intimately know—Then it comes under the ordeal of man's severest judgment, because, while it hath mortified his pride, it hath laid itself open to the scrutiny of his most close and intimate observation. Man hath no antecedent knowledge wherewith to confront the messenger, who fetches down information from the altitudes of heaven; but he may be well able to confront him, when told of the things that lie within the grasp of his own consciousness—because all within the limits of his own moral and spiritual economy. He may know, for example, whether he lives without God in the world. He may know whether or not there be such a thing as the fear of God before his eyes. It is a matter of fact that lies within the reach of his internal observation, whether the affection he bears to the things that are made hath wholly dispossessed him of the affection he owes to Him who formed all and who upholds all. He might know, upon prior and independent ground, whether he be justly chargeable with all that foul and fearful guilt which the scriptures have so boldly denounced against him. Had they restricted their information to the things of heaven that are without our reach, they might have claimed the deference of our entire understanding, and reposed on the strength of their external evidence alone. But they have touched furthermore on the things of earth that are within our reach, and, in so doing, they have made an appeal to the consciences of men—they have placed themselves at the bar of a human reckoning, where, if they are convicted of error, the fallacy of their high pretensions will be

instantly exposed; or where, it may possibly be found, that such is the marvellous truth even of their most singular and most startling affirmations, as to stamp upon this extraordinary volume the credit and the character of that divinity which it claims.

11. But, as in other examples, this part too of the subject-matter of scripture has been turned into an objection against it. It is not to be told, how much of odium and resistance the affirmation in the Bible, of the blight or the great moral degeneracy wherewith our species have been smitten, has had to encounter. Had it kept on the ground of vague and inapplicable generalities, the doctrine might have been tolerated, as a harmless, or even a plausible speculation. But it has not only made a sweeping and indiscriminate charge against humanity in the lump; it has brought the charge so specifically home to each individual, it has sent it forth with an aim so pointed and so personal, that there is not any who can make his escape from it. While it has made broad and general accusation of all, it has also given such express and special direction of it to each and to every; it has spoken so unsparingly and in such unmeasured terms even of the loveliest of our kind; and, without regard to the varieties of the better or the worse, hath lifted the stern denunciation that none is righteous, no not one, that all the righteousness which our nature can claim is as filthy rags, that the whole world is guilty before God, that all are the children of wrath, that all are the heirs of damnation. It is

truly not to be wondered at—it is a most natural reaction on the part of arraigned and vilified humanity—it is just the revolt that we should have expected, and expected too from those of her children who were the loveliest in charity or stood the most erect in the pride of their own native integrity and honour—when they shrink with veriest disgust from such a low and loathsome representation of our nature; and are heard to exclaim against it as the hateful dogma of a theology the most unfeeling and barbarous.

12. We feel too, that, by such an averment as this, invasion is made on the province of man's own natural and independent knowledge. It makes no transgression of its legitimate boundaries, when, on the question of the *quid oportet*, it claims a right of cognizance over both the terrestrial and the celestial ethics; and, on the question of the *quid est*, though it has given up the celestial to the informations of a messenger from heaven, yet, on the terrestrial field, it hath a prior and independent observation of its own, and can lay its immediate hold on all the facts which lie within the confines of sight and of experience. In virtue then of this ample cognizance which it is competent for it to take of the *quid oportet*, we should at least know what of duty we owe to the God who formed and who sustains us. And, in virtue of that more limited cognizance which we can take of the *quid est*, we may at least, one should think, venture so far as to judge of our own hearts and our own lives, and pronounce upon the home question of fact—whether this duty be actually rendered. At

this part of the investigation, we stand upon that debateable ground, on which an adjustment ought to be made, between the light of conscience and observation or the light of nature on the one hand, and the light of a professed revelation on the other; and it is wholly impossible to avoid making reference to both. In this instance these two lights as it were cross each other, or rather, both have descended upon the same subject; and each hath given to it a special illumination of its own. They are like two witnesses who might be confronted either to their mutual discredit, or to their joint and honourable vindication. At all events, the one has uttered an affirmation in regard to a matter, upon which the other has an immediate eye; and, out of the discrepancy or out of the agreement between the utterance of the first and the finding of the second, we might draw a conclusion of highest importance to the claims and the credentials of both.

13. First then as to the *quid oportet* of this question, the duty or the ethical relation that subsists between the creature and his Creator—let nature be called in to pronounce upon it, and by the light too of her own principles. Let her but attend to the complete sovereignty on the one hand, and the as complete subordination upon the other. Let her think more especially of man, upholden, in the mechanism of his delicate and complicated frame work, by the care of an unseen but unerring hand—of that wakeful guardianship which never for one moment is intermitted, and is kept up for years together under all the thoughtless ingratitude

of him who is its object—of the thousand circumstances above all, of which the great and the living energy that is above us has the most perfect control, and, by the slightest defect or disproportion of any one of which we might be haunted all life long by the agony of a sore endurance—of the fact notwithstanding, that, throughout the vast majority of our days, there is perfect ease, and many precious intervals lighted up by positive enjoyment—of all the tenderness which this implies on the part of the heavenly father whose workmanship we are; and who spread around us an external nature, that teems with adaptations innumerable, to the senses and the organs wherewith He Himself has furnished us. Let us only think that on His simple will is suspended, the difference between our annihilation and our being; and that, if by the withdrawment of His sustaining energy our heart should cease to beat or our blood to circulate, the change to each of us would be fully as momentous, as if all the lights of the universe were put out, and this earth and these heavens were swept away. Let us then think of this God, on whom we so wholly depend, calling for no other return, than the services of love to Himself, and of kindness to all the children of His family; and, in the rendering of which, we advance to the uttermost the worth and the dignity of our own nature. Let us think too of God as a Being concerned in the morality of his creatures; that He holds their virtue to be His glory, and their vice to be that nuisance upon the face of creation by which the high majesty of heaven is put to scorn. On these

premises surely—on what we feel and know of the relationship between the thing that is formed and Him who has formed it, we might confidently say, whether ought can be named, that is a greater violence on the propriety of things, than the ingratitude of man to his Maker—or whether in all the records of jurisprudence any guilt can be specified, of more deep and crimson dye, than the guilt of a careless and thoughtless and thankless ungodliness.

14. So much for the "*quid oportet*"—a question on which man can pronounce by his own moral light, even though it concerns the relationship in which he stands to those objects that are exalted above him, on the lofty and to him inaccessible region of the celestial ethics; and then as to the "*quid est*" of this argument—a question on which he may pronounce by the lights of memory and observation, when, as in the present instance, it is a question of fact, the materials of which lie near at hand on the surface of our terrestrial arena. The reply to this question glares upon us from the whole colour of our past history. There is a voice within the receptacles of the heart, that sends it in secret but impressive whispers to the ear of the inner man. It tells us, and with a power of moral evidence from which all escape is impossible, that we are aliens from God. It makes known to us, that a sense of the divinity is habitually absent from the mind; and that, in the busy engrossment of all our faculties with the things of sense and of time which are around us, there is scarcely the recognition of a God all the day long. One man

walks on a more elevated path of patriotism, of philanthropy, and honour than another; but all of them walk in the independence of their own counsels. They have in truth cast off the authority of heaven, and it scarcely mingles any perceptible influence with the affairs or the occupations of men. Let there but be a correct analysis of human motives; and, amid the exceeding variety of those which have a deciding ascendancy over the spirit, we shall seldom, almost never, arrive at a simple devotedness to the will of the Maker. There is, on this subject, a very sore and unhappy delusion; and that has veiled the actual truth of the question from the eye of observers. In the absence of all piety, there is still many an upright and honourable motive by which the breast may be actuated; but it were an unphilosophical confounding of one thing with another, to allege these as any evidence of regard to a God, who, during the whole play and operation of these motives, is never perhaps thought of. There are divers principles, all of which may be good in their kind, and yet each of which may be distinct from the others. A sense of honour is good—instinctive humanity is good—the delicacy that recoils from ought that is unhallowed in word or in imagination is very beautiful and very good—the fidelity which spurns away all the temptations of interest is most unquestionably good—the horror at cruelty; the lively remembrances of gratitude to an earthly benefactor; the tenderness, whether of filial or of parental affection; the constancy of unalterable friendship; the generous love of liberty; the graceful sensibility that,

not only weeps over human wretchedness, but lavishes upon it of its succour as well as its sympathy—these are all so many features of the humanity wherewith we are clothed, and all of them are very good. But, as they are distinct the one from the other, so may they be distinct from that which is strictly and essentially the religious principle. They may exist apart from piety. They might have all a dwelling-place in that heart, within the repositories of which, the practical sense of God, or a principle of deference to His authority is not to be found. The man of native integrity is a nobler and a finer specimen of our kind, than the man of a creeping and ignoble selfishness. Yet the bosom of each may be alike desolate of piety. And this is the universal charge which is preferred against all the men of all the families of our species. It is not that all are destitute of benevolence or justice or truth—for this were experimentally untrue. But it is that all by nature are destitute of piety. It is not that the morality which reciprocates between man and man is extinct; but it is that the morality which connects earth with heaven has been broken asunder; and the world is now disjoined from that God, with whom it stood at one time in high and heavenly relationship. One might imagine the gravitation of our planet to the sun to be suspended; and that it wandered on a strange excursion over the fields of immensity. Yet still it may bear along with it the very laws and processes, which, independently of the great central body in our system, now obtains within the limits of this lower world. It

may retain, even in the darkness of its wayward and unregulated course—it may retain its chemistry, and its magnetism, and the cohesion of its parts, and the attraction at least which maintains its own spherical form and binds the sea and the atmosphere and all that is around it to its surface. And so in the moral economy. There may be the disruption of our species from their God. The world they inhabit may have become an outcast from the region of the celestial ethics. The great family of mankind may have wandered from Him who is their Head. The affinity which at one time obtained between God and the creatures of this lower world may have been dissolved, and yet there may still be in operation, many a powerful and many a precious affinity among themselves. There may be the reciprocal play, even throughout this alienated planet of ours, of good affections and tender sympathies and many amiable and moral and neighbour-like regards. There is an earth-born virtue that will mingle with the passions and atrocities of the human character, and mitigate the else darker aspect of human affairs—and yet it may remain a truth, not merely announced by scripture, but confirmed by experience, that Nature hath renounced her wonted alliance with the Divinity, that the world hath departed from its God.

15. That indeed is a woful delusion by which the natural graces and virtues of the human character are pled in mitigation of its ungodliness. When beheld in their true light, they enhance and they aggravate the charge. For what after

all are these virtues? Who gave us the moral constitution of which they form a part and an ornament? Who is it that causes the pulse of an honourable man so to beat in the pride of a high-minded integrity? Who poured the milk of human kindness into the economy of our affections? Who is it that attuned the heart to those manifold sympathies by which it is actuated? Who gave the delightful sensibilities of nature their play, and sent forth the charities of life to bless and to gladden the whole aspect of human society? Who is the author of this beneficial mechanism; and by whose hand has so much of this boasted loveliness been spread over the aspect of our species? The very Being who pencilled all the glories of nature's landscape, is the Being who strewed the moral landscape by all the graces wherewith it is adorned. Each virtue, which serves to deck and to dignify our nature, is an additional obligation to Him who is the author of it. It calls for a louder gratitude to Him who has so liberally endowed us; and therefore stamps a deeper atrocity on our ungrateful disregard of Him. These moral accomplishments are so many gifts, that only inflict the stain of a fouller turpitude on our indifference to the Giver, and make the state of practical atheism in which we live to be still more enormous.

16. We have already given an illustration of the moral by the natural philosophy.* In the latter science, we know how to distinguish the facts from the mathematics; and we are perfectly

* See our "Natural Theology," Vol. i. Chap. II. Art. 28—36.

aware that the mathematics which avail for the terrestrial, avail for the celestial physics also. It is conceivable that every object of the celestial physics may somehow or other be shrouded from the discernment of our species; that all which is known of the material heavens might pass into oblivion, and be beyond the power of our recalment; that thus all the celestial of Natural Philosophy might vanish away from the sight and the remembrance of men. This were the ruin of our astronomy; but it would not be the ruin of our mathematics—all the principles of which would still abide in the world, and admit of the same application as before to the objects and the distances on the face of our earth. And so it is with the celestial in Moral Philosophy. There is a distinction to be made here too; and the distinction is between the objects of the science and the ethics of the science. Here also it is conceivable that the objects of the heavenly region may be forgotten; yet the ethics would remain, and continue to have an application to the objects of the earthly region. Just as there is a mathematics that would survive the extinction of Astronomy—so there is a morals that would survive the extinction of our Theology; and as the mere existence of the mathematics bears no evidence to there being an Astronomy, after that all the objects of this science cease to be remembered—so the mere existence of a morals bears no evidence to the godliness of man, after that God has ceased to be regarded by them.

17. But these considerations, however fit to be addressed to those who philosophize on the subjects

of moral science, are vastly too general to be of any efficacy with the unlettered multitude. And therefore it is well, that the delusion which we now endeavour to expose, is not the one by which they are most liable to be misled. They see the truth more in its nakedness. It is not so hidden from their view, by the gloss of sentimentalism—nor in humble life, must it be confessed, do there exist so many of those graces and plausibilities of character which have served, but served most unjustly, to alleviate, among the higher classes of society, the felt guilt of their real and practical indifference to God. This guilt, wherewith the book in question charges one and all of the children of humanity, it is found of the unsophisticated peasant, that he more willingly takes home, than the votary either of imagination or of science. There lies, as it were, a more open and unobstructed avenue between the volume in his hand, and the conscience that lies within his heart—so that the representations given by the one are more frequently and faithfully responded to, by the echo of a consenting testimony on the part of the other. It is thus that the evidence in question multiplies upon his observation, more than it often does on a reader of lofty scholarship and academic cultivation; and that whether scripture tells him of the moral disease that is upon his spirit, or proposes to him its own remedy for the removal of it—there is a coalescence between all that he feels within himself, and all that he descries on the outer page of revelation. The very simplicity of his mind lays it open to a more correct impression

of the external truth; and his exemption from the prejudices of taste and vanity and refinement favours a clearer discernment, both of the matters that lie within the recesses of the inner man and which are cognizable by conscience alone, and also of the matters that lie on the face of the world and of general society—on which even the homely and unlettered peasant is often known to cast an eye of most intelligent observation. It is thus—that, having access on the one hand to the volume of a profest revelation, and access on the other to the whole of that home territory which forms the scene or the subject of many of its descriptions, he has two sides of a comparison, from the one to the other of which, there might be a busy play and interchange, between the readings of the book and the reflections of an independent consciousness. It is the sustained and the varied and the unexcepted coincidence between the sayings of the volume and the findings of him who peruses it—it is this which constitutes the internal evidence on which we now insist. It is this which, even at the very outset of our inquiries, stamps a verisimilitude on this profest record of an embassy from heaven,—a verisimilitude that we believe will with every honest and persevering inquirer be heightened at length into the impression, and that not a fanciful, but a most rational and well-warranted impression of its verity—so as to make stand out, even to the eye of our general population, such marks and characters on the face of the volume itself, as might palpably announce to them the divinity that penned it.

18. There is the philosophy of the subject as

well as its poetry in the following beautiful lines of Cowper—when he compares the happier intelligence of a poor and an aged female with that of Voltaire :

> " She for her humble sphere by nature fit,
> Of little understanding and no wit,
> Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,
> A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew ;
> And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
> Her title to a treasure in the skies.
>
> " O happy peasant, O unhappy bard—
> His the mere tinsel, her's the rich reward.
> He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,
> She never heard of half a mile from home ;
> He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
> She safe in the simplicity of hers."

19. It should be remarked, that, though in illustrating this branch of the experimental evidence, we confine ourselves to the affirmation which the Bible makes of human depravity, this is but one example of the accordancy which obtains between the statements of scripture and the felt state of the human heart. The Bible is instinct throughout with this evidence—so that a reader, at once enlightened in the knowledge of himself and in the knowledge of that book which pictures man forth to the eye of his own consciousness, feels in the perusal of it, a powerful and penetrating intelligence lighting up its pages. Even the one doctrine of man's moral depravation is set forth, not nakedly and dogmatically like the article of a creed—but often with incidental touches of graphic and descriptive accuracy which awaken the most vivid recognition in the mind; so that when telling in various ways of man's alienation, of

his "living without God in the world," of his "not seeking after God," of "God not being in all his thoughts," of his "loving the creature more than the Creator," of God being a "wilderness and a weariness" unto him, of his "walking in the counsel of his own heart and after the sight of his own eyes," of his "turning every man to his own way" —these sayings come home to consciences made alive, and serve to build up, at length to establish, the confidence of the reader, whose repeated observation of the Bible as an unfailing discerner leads him to submit to it as an infallible guide.

20. Even in the readings of ordinary authorship, when either a faithful picture is rendered of human manners, or a correct delineation is given of the human heart—how quick and vivid is our perception of the likeness. To the voice of the witness from without, there is an instant echo given by conscience which is the witness in our bosom. The remarkable thing is, that in this way a skilful observer can make us recognize, and that immediately, what we have never adverted to before; and what, but for him, might ever have remained among the unnoticed peculiarities of our own character. The truth is, that within the recesses of one's own breast, there may lurk a variety of affections that are of daily and hourly influence, but of which to this moment we have been wholly unconscious—having never once cast an eye upon them of reflex observation.* But on the moment that some sagacious acquaintance, or some pro-

* See this further explained in our "Natural Theology," Book IV., Chap. I, Art. 3 and 4.

found and penetrating writer, hath by his shrewd remark directed our eye towards them—it is a remark the truth of which we may instantly recognize, and a flood of new light is made to break in upon the before unrevealed mysteries of the soul. This is what has well been called the manifestation of the truth unto the conscience—a manifestation that is instantly followed up by the consent of the inward faculty to the outward affirmations—which affirmations, we repeat, might be so varied, and reach so far among the recesses and profundities of the human constitution, and be so evidently beyond the compass of all human sagacity—that when actually either heard or read from without, and then responded to by the light of one's own conscience from within, they might impress and most warrantably impress the belief that they have proceeded from a sublimer and more searching intellect than any which is to be found among mortals here below.

21. Now what is the nature of those scriptural affirmations which conscience may try and may decide upon? They relate of course to those matters which fall within the recognition of this faculty, or lie upon that territory over which its view is extended. It is indeed a most peculiar averment on the part of the Bible, when it announces, and that without reserve or modification, the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart; when it predicates not of one mind but of every mind which has not been transformed by the influence of its own doctrines, that it is enmity against God; when it casts abroad over

the face of a world teeming with specimens of humanity, the charge that in each and all of these specimens we shall detect such a love to the creature as is exclusive of love to the Creator; when, with the most unveering and unabating consistency, it charges a great moral and spiritual corruption on all the members of the human family —insomuch as to affirm that there is none righteous no not one, and that all are so much by nature the children of disobedience as by nature to be the children of wrath. On this particular ground, the Bible stands aloof from every composition that has not borrowed from its own pages. We meet with nothing like it in the whole region of authorship. There is misanthropy we admit. There is the indignation of man against his fellows. There are satire and severity and sentiment directed against the vices of society. There is the soreness of human feeling on the part of those who have been outraged of their rights, or mortified in their vanity, or driven to spleen and to solitude by some morbid peculiarity of temperament, and there find relief from their agitations by wreaking a wholesale contempt upon the species. There is the distempered eloquence of Rousseau, and there is the darkly vindictive poetry of Byron, and there is the biting irony of Swift, all arraigning the nature which they wear. But each is evidently asserting his own controversy. Each of them is avenging his own quarrel. It is not the ungodliness of man which forms any article of their impeachment against him. Theirs is all an indictment preferred against men for their universal deceit and malig-

nity, the one against the other; and, with such a tone of resentfulness too, as implies that they had felt themselves to be the sufferers. It is in the Bible alone, where we see an indictment preferred against our whole species in the name of God. It is there alone where the universal charge is advanced, of departure and revolt against Him who made them. It is there alone where, without any tincture from the soreness of wounded humanity, we meet with the grave and unimpassioned and at the same time most decisive and persevering assertion of a great controversy, between God and all that is human in this world's wide and peopled territory. It is there that, in the records of an embassy, the profest object of which is not to retaliate upon man by severe denunciation, but to reconcile him by the offers of pardon, he is charged with a sinfulness as universal among the individuals of his race, as is the death which they have to undergo. It is not with the Bible as it is with the capricious judgment of man upon his fellows, who at one time pours forth upon them the vindictiveness of his injured feelings, and at another would clothe them in almost poetic excellence—ever changing his impression of the species with the varying hue of the individuals who pass before him; and, under the impulse of his wayward imagination, vilifying or idolizing his own nature, just as self is affected by it. There is something which stands most manifestly and separately out from all this in the one constant deliverance of Scripture, which, without faltering, affirms this province of God to be in deepest

rebellion against Him; and that, in reference to Him, all have come under a curse, and all are dead in trespasses and in sins.

22. Now for the manifestation of the truth of this word unto the conscience, it is not necessary that each should have a conscience for all—it is enough that he has a conscience for himself. It is enough that each individual man carries home to himself, what the Bible says of all men. What is true of all, is true of every; and though each reader should retire within the chamber of his own separate consciousness, he will find materials there with which he can confront the Bible, and bring it to the test of a comparison between what it confidently says and what he certainly knows. He will be able to convict this book of rash and ignorant affirmation, if, on consulting his own heart, he ascertains that it loves God; or if, on reviewing his own life, he finds that he lives with God in the world; or if, on reflecting upon his own tastes, he can aver that no created good has such charms for him, as has the Being from whom it all originated; or if, on considering what the prospects are which chiefly engross and delight his imagination, he can say with conscious assurance that it is the prospect of a glorious eternity in Heaven, and not of some fair resting-place within the verge of our lower world. If these be indeed the habits of his nature, then has the Bible put itself into his power, and furnished him with a weapon by which he can disprove and may disown it. But if, instead of speaking against, it in every particular speaks with his intimate experience; if,

on entering the penetralia of his inner man, it there evinces itself to be indeed a most piercing and enlightened discerner; if, on reading its pages, he is conscious all the while that he is reading the characters of his own soul, and is holding converse with an author whose eye and whose intellect has taken a correct survey of his moral constitution throughout all its hiding places; if, through the consenting testimony of his own heart, every charge brought against man in the Bible is followed up by the conviction that of him at least, and of his heart it is true; if he is sensible that he really is all that the Bible affirms man apart from the transforming influence of its own doctrine to be—that he lives without God and without hope in the world—that, unmindful of the desire of his Maker, he follows after the desires of his own flesh and his own mind—that, whatever the power may be of civil and natural restraints over his conduct, the direct authority of God has no presiding influence over him—that he neither seeks after his Maker, nor cares to understand Him—that he either dreads God or practically disowns Him, and at all events has no filial confidence or affection towards Him—that self and sense and time are his idols—and that God is too far removed in the distant heavens, and the ultimate enjoyment of His presence too far removed in the distant eternity, to be motives of any ascendancy over the doings or the deliberations of his personal history in the world.—If he read all this in the Bible, and conscience respond to it all in his own bosom, then might we not conceive such readings to be so multiplied, and such responses in every

instance to be so accordant with them, as to stamp on this book all the credit of the inspiration which it claims?

23. There is no wisdom which so commands our reverence, as that which evinces its discernment of man; as that which can enter the recesses of the heart, and there detect all its lurking and unseen tendencies; as that by which our mysterious nature is probed and penetrated, and there are brought out, to the conviction of those who wear it, the lineaments which are actually thereupon engraven. We must all be sensible of the charm with which we have looked to a picture of human life, the fidelity of which we recognize; and also of the homage we render to him who can shrewdly find his way through the ambiguities of the human character, and lay before us in just delineation the various feelings and principles which belong to it. There is no way in which one man could earn from another the credit of a more marvellous sagacity, than by presenting him with a copy of himself that his own conscience told him was true to the original—and that, just in proportion to the number of the lines of resemblance that he introduced, and to the secrecy in which they lay wrapt from common or general observation. But in this way, is it possible to conceive, that the marvellous may rise into the miraculous—and, instead of a skilful moralist, may he who thus anatomizes my mental frame and reveals to me its structure and its parts, impress me with the belief of a gifted Apostle; and whether I hear from his own mouth the divinations that he has practised upon me, or read

it in the authorship that he has left behind him, may I be led to the very exclamation of those early converts to our faith, who felt that the secrets of their hearts had by their teachers been made manifest, and so they fell down upon their face, and worshipped God, and reported that God was in them of a truth.

24. There is a peculiarity which often belongs to the informations of him who tells me that which passes within the limits of my own moral nature, which does not belong to him who tells me of that which passes without the limits either of my consciousness or of my own personal observation. He who relates to me the things which take place at a distance, may relate such things as my eye never saw and my ears never heard of, and which therefore impress me with all the strangeness of novelties, in the truth of which I have no other ground of reliance than the testimony of my informer. He who relates to me the things which take place within the chambers of my own heart, may relate to me such things as I have often felt and daily continue to feel; but they may at the same time be such things as I have always suffered to pass away, without remembrance and without observation. But it is very possible that the thing which I at one time felt, and then instantly forgot, and would have forgotten for ever, may reappear upon the memory, the moment that I am told of it. An acquaintance may remind me of an event which took place on some past day of my existence, that but for his doing so would never again have been present to my thoughts, till the

hour of my departure from the world. By a simple statement of the circumstances, he may bring up again to my most distinct and vivid recollection, that which had long sunk into the abyss of forgetfulness, and but for him might have remained there for ever. And what is true of a forgotten event in my history, is just as true of many of the forgotten emotions of my heart. A moralist may recal them to my notice, and I, upon his doing so, may instantly recognize them to have been my emotions; and he may turn them into the materials upon which he announces some principle or general law of my moral nature; and I may be struck with this law as the accurately just expression of what I had often felt, but never till now had reflected upon; and thus it is, that, while when the traveller relates what is beyond the range of my observation I may have nought to rely on but his testimony, when the moralist relates what passes in the busy receptacle of my own feelings, a thousand recollections may immediately start as it were from the slumbers of oblivion, and be vouchers for him that he is a true discerner. In one sense what he affirms is a novelty—for, though it be all about the daily and familiar processes of my own mind, yet they are such processes as I had never registered, but suffered all along to escape from my consciousness entirely. Yet in another sense, it is not a novelty—for, now that he relates the mental feeling or mental operation, my own memory responds to the truth of it, and I now know to be true that of which I never before noticed the existence—and, though I see in

consequence what I never saw before, yet this is simply because I never looked upon it before—and, now that I do look upon it, I cannot fail to recognize it as the unregarded companion of many a former day, as the inmate perhaps of my hourly and most familiar experience.

25. Thus it is that one man may diffuse a light over the field of another man's conscience; and guide him to the discernment of things which respect himself, and yet which he never before adverted to; and attest of him what he has not once observed, but what notwithstanding he on the instant recognizes to be true; and by a succession of bare statements, may gain at every step upon his confidence—for, no sooner does the one relate than the other may recal; and the affirmations of the former may be met by the inward responses of the latter; and as the teacher draws, so to speak, the map of man's moral constitution, the traces which had long faded away from the remembrance of the scholar, may again come forth into visibility. It is thus that one man may not only tell to another such things as respect himself, and which he already knows—but he may also discover to him such things which respect himself and are daily present with him as he does not know. They are the things which he does neither notice at the time, nor remember afterwards—the fugitive sensations which pass through his heart in busy and perpetual career, to which he does not advert himself, but which he would instantly recollect and recognize were another to advert to them. It is this which gives such a charm to the descrip-

tive poetry of him who often pictures what all must have felt, yet never may have reflected upon—and which confers such an interest on the performance of one man, when he holds up to another man the mirror of himself—and which invests the philosophic sage who has made our common nature the province of his studious and skilful observation, with the credit of being a quick and a powerful discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart—one perhaps who can pierce and divide asunder his way through all the dormancies of another's unconsciousness, and can awaken in the bosom of many a disciple such recollections as had been long asleep, and out of these recollections can furnish each with his own image so as that he himself may recognize it. And thus again, without an argumentative process at all, without inference and without logical demonstration, but solely by judicious statements recommending themselves and approving their own truth to every man's conscience, may new and sound and most important lessons of moral wisdom be conveyed.

26. II. The second branch of the experimental evidence which we proposed to expound, lies in the accordancy between what the Bible overtures for our acceptance, and what we feel ourselves to need. Like the first it requires a comparison between the objective and the subjective. Even previous to our contemplation of the overtures of relief, our felt need of relief could only have arisen from a regard had by us to both—that is, to the objective, when we think of the character of God

the lawgiver; and to the subjective, when we think of our own character as the subjects of His law. With our actual moral nature, we cannot escape from the impression of a reigning and righteous sovereign, who cannot be mocked, but whose authority, if trampled on, must be some way vindicated and maintained. On the other hand, we can as little escape from the consciousness of being defaulters to that high and holy government under which we sit; and the most direct and palpable vindication of which were the condemnation and adequate punishment of the offenders. And thus a sense of our disruption from God, and of His displeasure against us may be said to haunt us continually. It is true that, for the greater part of life, we live in a state of exemption from this sore disquietude—not however because we have laid our confident hold on any relief or reconciliation which has been authentically proposed to us; but because, in the manifold engagements of the world, we have the faculty of committing the whole subject to oblivion, and can live at ease, simply because the thought of an angry God or of a coming vengeance is away from our hearts. It is not because we have made up the quarrel; but it is when we forget the quarrel, that we slumber in the tranquillity of our deep and fatal unconsciousness. When made fully awake to the realities of our condition, there is an unavoidable sense of necessity and of danger; and, with even nothing but the theology of conscience brought home to the bosom of guilty man, there is enough to excite his fears in the apprehended frown of the God who is above him,

in the anticipated terrors of the judgment which is before him.

27. On this subject conscience, when once made alive, gets the better of all those representations which are made of God, by the expounders of a poetic or sentimental theism. There is a disposition to merge all the characteristics of the divinity into one: and while with many of our most eminent writers, the exuberant goodness, the soft and yielding benignity, the mercy that overlooks and makes liberal allowance for the infirmities of human weakness, have been fondly and most abundantly dwelt upon—there has been what the French would call, if not a studied, at least an actually observed *reticence*, on the subject of His truth and purity and His hatred of moral evil. There can be no government without a law; and the question is little entertained—how are the violations of that law to be disposed of? Every law has its sanctions—the hopes of proffered reward on the one hand, the fears of threatened vengeance upon the other. Is the vengeance to be threatened only, but never to be executed? Is guilt only to be dealt with by proclamations that go before, but never by punishments that are to follow? What becomes of the truth or the dignity of heaven's government—if man is to rebel, and God, stripped of every attribute but tenderness, can give no demonstration of His incensed and violated majesty? There is positively no law, if there be not a force and a certainty in its sanctions. Take away from jurisprudence its penalties, or, what were still worse, let the penalties only be denounced but never be exacted; and we

reduce the whole to an unsubstantial mockery. The fabric of moral government falls to pieces; and, instead of a great presiding authority in the universe, we have a subverted throne and a degraded sovereign. If the lawgiver in his treatment of sin is to betray a perpetual vacillation; if at one time sin shall be the object of high-sounding but empty menaces, and at another be connived at or even looked to by an indulgent God with complacency; if there is only to be the parade of a judicial economy, without any of its power or its performance; if the truth is only to be kept in the promises of reward, but as constantly to be receded from in the threats of vengeance; if the judge is thus to be lost in the overweening parent—then there is positively nothing of a moral government over us but the name. We are not the subjects of God's authority; we are but the fondlings of his regard. Under a system like this, the whole universe would drift as it were into a state of anarchy; and, in the uproar of this wild misrule, the King who sitteth on high, would lose his hold on the creation that he had formed.

28. It is impossible to pursue this speculation into its consequences, without being shut up unto the conclusion, that there is indeed a moral government; and, if so, that there is indeed a law with its accompanying sanctions; and, again if so, that guilt and condemnation, that sin and punishment, follow in the train of each other. Now what we complain of is, that, in the great majority of our writers on Natural Theism, while a moral government is admitted in the general, the doctrine is not

at all carried out to its specific applications. There is nothing done to dispose of the palpable fact which glares so obviously upon us, that the rule of this government has been transgressed by every individual of the human species; and that all, without exception, have become amenable to the high jurisdiction of heaven for their gross and repeated violations of it. Either this government then must resign its authority and honour; or man is in that fearful dilemma, from which it deeply concerns one and all of us to know how it is that we can possibly be extricated. Now this is a question which the advocates of Natural Theism have scarcely ever offered to dispose of. By far the greatest number of them have blinked it altogether, or at least left it wholly unresolved. It remains with almost every one of them in the state of an unsettled problem; and though both the character of God and the destinies of man are most essentially involved in it, yet if touched by any, it is with a very delicate and undecided hand. It is no vindication, that it lies not within the limits of their department. It is very true, that it lies not within their limits in the shape of a doctrine. But it lies within their limits in the shape of a desideratum. They know as much both of the "*Quid oportet*" and the "*quid est*," as to assure them of the conclusion, that all men have done despite to the authority of heaven—and the yet unresolved difficulty is, how can it consist with the truth and the unchangeableness of this authority, that the High and the Holy One, whose dwelling-place is among the sublimities of an unapproachable sacredness, how

can He again look on His polluted creatures with complacency? How, in a word, is the compromise to be struck between the mercy of God and the majesty of His government; and in what terms shall that deed of amnesty be framed, which both provides an outlet for the divine goodness on a sinful world, and inflicts not an irreparable blow on the other lofty and unchangeable attributes of His nature?

29. It may not be for the expounder of moral science to find a positive reply to this question. He may not be in possession of resources for the solution of it: but there lie within his reach the materials for the enunciation of it; and this enunciation, he ought to have bequeathed or handed over to the professor of the Christian Theology. With the former it lies in the shape of an unreduced formula—a formula which he at least is able to construct, though not able to pass through the intermediate steps to the final resolution of it. Now it is the preparation of these formulæ that appears to us the most important service which moral philosophy can render. It can collect the data for the construction of questions, and then present them for solution to the disciples of another and higher calculus. And how shall that God who hath both the truth of a righteous and the authority of a powerful sovereign—how shall He take sinners into acceptance, is just one of these questions. How, without the disgrace and indeed the overthrow of heaven's jurisdiction, can heaven ever be entered by those who have rebelled against the king who sitteth on its throne—this, it may

not be the part of moral philosophy to pronounce upon as a doctrine; but altogether its part to make it over as a difficulty to those who can resolve it. The error is, not that it has failed to make out the account. But the error is that it has closed the account, and so sends away its disciples with the impression of a sufficiency which it cannot realize. We do not require of it to put forth a physician's hand to a disease which lies beyond the reach of its prescriptions. But we require of it as full and fair an exhibition as it can give of the disease. We charge it with having misled its votaries into a false and ruinous security—with having said peace when there was no peace—with the soft and the soothing whispers which it has given forth, when it ought to have sounded the trumpet of alarm—and, in the face of those intimations which even Nature hath uttered of a fearful and unsettled controversy, with having suppressed every warning of the danger; and, by the lullaby of a delusive eloquence, having hushed all its votaries to sleep among the urgencies of an impending storm.

30. And it is further to be observed of this question, that, if left undetermined, it not only casts an ambiguity on the character of God in heaven; but it throws into a state of utter precariousness the cause of human virtue upon earth. The question is—if mercy shall be rendered at the expense of justice, at what point in the scale of moral worth or of moral worthlessness, shall the one attribute give way to the other? If all have sinned, but in spite of this the mercy of God advances a certain way over the domain of

humanity, it is a most natural and we should think a most needful inquiry—how far? By what line are the outcasts of condemnation, to whom no forgiveness can be extended, separated from those who are within the confines of pardon and pity from on high? The truth is, that, in the absence of all that is clear and all that is definite, every man will suit the reply to his own imagination; or, what is likelier still, to his own convenience. The law of heaven will be brought down to a degrading compromise with human corruption and human indolence. Each will make the adjustment for himself; and, sinning just as much as he likes, will still figure that the indulgence of the God who knoweth our frame, and will make merciful allowance for all its infirmities—will be extended too to his own frailties and his own errors. The attributes of the Godhead will be made to play fast and loose with each other; and so as to accommodate the standard of the divine exactions to the ever-varying practice of men. There is a scale of moral worth that comprehends all the varieties of character in our world—up from the loveliest and most honourable of the species, down to those who are sunk in the worst excesses of profligacy: and, as none can say, at what point in this scale the momentous transition in question is situated, each will determine it for himself; and so be able to combine the peace of his own spirit, with the full indulgence of all its waywardness. He will sin just as much as he likes; and yet he will hope just as largely as his own fancy or his own wishes can carry him. He will give himself

up to his own impulses in this world; and yet be as little disturbed by the prospect of another, as if he fetched every practical impulse of his life from the will of Him who has the disposal both of his time and of his eternity. It is thus that a deep and fatal security hath spread itself over the face of our alienated world; that men, even in the very midst of their rebellion, have no disturbance whatever from their fears; that under all the gradations of morality, even down to the malefactor's cell, there is still a vague confidence in the mercy of God; that they do not tremble under a sense of His justice, because they have confounded the attributes at their pleasure and made the one to efface the character of the other. All is loose and obscure and indeterminate, under the lax administration of a law—whose sanctions have no fulfilment, whose threats have no significancy. This we hold to be the state of our academic theism, and a state the more dangerous, because of that seeming air of completeness and sufficiency wherewith she has finished off the ample round of her demonstrations. She looks with all the complacency of having done a full and a finished achievement, and that without one utterance on man's universal sinfulness—making no provision for the offended dignity of God in heaven, and no provision for the prostrate cause of godliness upon earth.

31. It is well that the conscience of man is often too strong, both for the lethargy of nature, and for the illusions of this sentimental theism. The soul of him who rightly contrasts the sacredness of

the Divinity with the exceeding sinfulness of his own character, will not be so easily satisfied with the soft and flimsy representations which are often given of heaven's clemency. His moral nature, now quickened into adequate sensibility, must be otherwise met; and unless there be a revelation of mercy that makes full provision for the justice and truth and authority of the Godhead, he neither can view the Lawgiver as at peace with him nor himself as safe.

32. It is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and there alone, that he finds that precise counterpart which at once meets this difficulty and resolves it—a constitution of forgiveness which makes full exhibition of the divine character, without any violation to the jurisprudence of the upper sanctuary, or any conflict and concussion between the attributes of the High and the Holy one who presides over it.* The atonement of the cross

* So that beside the moral and the experimental, there is what may be called the doctrinal, as a branch of the internal evidence of Christianity—an evidence that results, not from the comparison of the objective truth with the subjective mind, but from the comparison of one truth or one doctrine of Christianity with another. The whole scheme, viewed objectively, may abound in those symphonies or adaptations of part to part, which might serve to recommend it as founded in wisdom, or as having a real foundation in the nature of things. The resulting evidence might be illustrated in this way. We can imagine the human bearers of a profest message from some distant part of the universe, to report certain peculiarities of its astronomical or physical system, which prove that matter there is under a law of gravitation different from our own; and yet that by a profound mathematics, each special phenomenon can be demonstrated to be a consequence of that law, which harmonizes all the separate informations, and gives consistency to them all. Let the apostles of such a revelation be simple and illiterate men, and palpably ignorant of mathematics—so as to make it obvious, that the distinct things which

adjusts all, reconciles all. It is the intelligent view of this great mystery which lets in a flood of light on the mind of the beholder—as he discerns the impress of infinite love and infinite sacredness on that wondrous scheme, in the contemplation of which he finds all the misgivings of his own guilty nature appeased, and yet his reverence for the divine nature unbroken.

33. Thus much on the second experimental evidence for the truth of a profest revelation—the first being the accordancy between the statements which are there made, and the felt state of the human heart. The second is founded on the

they tell could not have been educed by any reasoning process of their own. Then the dependence, the mathematical dependence of these things, argues that they must have received by information what they could not evolve by reasoning; and the consistency which obtains in the matter of their revelation speaks for the truth of it. Now the same might apply to the agreements, the profound and exquisite agreements, which obtain between the parts of the spiritual system—too manifold, and perhaps too recondite, to have been devised by the messengers who have been the bearers of it—thus evincing the transcendental wisdom or truth from which it must have had its rise. The doctrine of the atonement is far from being the only, though perhaps the most conspicuous, and certainly the most important exemplification of this—providing the freest and largest outlet for the divine mercy, and yet casting thereby a brighter radiance over the other attributes of the Godhead, and more especially over the divine holiness. The more intensely this is viewed, the deeper is the insight which it gives of Christianity, as a well-compacted system, that, instead of being devised by man, originated with Him who presides over the harmonies, of truth and of the universe. The more that the understanding is illuminated to behold the truths of scripture and their relations, the more will it appreciate the Bible as a well of hidden wisdom that is fathomless: and the more will it perceive the significancy of the expression "the unsearchable riches of Christ." This doctrinal evidence is entitled to a distinct chapter by itself. But we must stop somewhere—for however far we might prosecute the theme, we should still leave unfinished an argument that is in truth exhaustless.

accordancy between the felt wants of our nature, and the provision, that is there intimated to have been made for them. Both serve to manifest a power of divination. By the one it proves itself a skilful diviner of our thoughts; by the other a skilful diviner of our necessities. Had we time to expatiate on this second argument, we think it might be made palpable, that the hand of a God may be as directly inferred, from the adaptations which there are in the book of a profest revelation to the wants and the well-being of our moral economy—as from the adaptations which there are in the book of external nature to the wants and the well-being of our natural economy. If the beauty that regales the eye, if the music that charms the ear, if the food that appeases the hunger and sustains the else decaying body in health and vigour, if the many fitnesses of outward things to the senses and the convenience of man—if on these there can be validly founded the conclusion, that the same God who constructed our material framework, may also be traced in the manifold congruities of the surrounding materialism—then might there likewise be such a varied suitableness between the needs and the fears and the appetencies of man's spirit on the one hand, and the doctrines or the directions of that volume which is addressed to him on the other, as to put the legible impress of a presiding and an inspiring divinity upon its pages. Were full development given to this most interesting conclusion, we think that the evidence of a designing God may be made to shine forth as directly from His word, as it does from His works.

And if we will only think of the vivid recognition, which even the most unlettered of our peasantry can take of his necessities and his dangers; and also of the distinct intelligence wherewith he can lay hold of the simplicities of Scripture—we shall perceive that between the one and the other, he may have all the materials within his reach for the argument before us. Let us add to this consideration the principle upon which Dr. Paley holds anatomy to be a better substratum on which to rear an argument for a God than astronomy. Let us think with him, that, within a narrow compass, the relations of fitness may be so crowded, as to give more intense proof of a divinity, than can the sublime but simple relations which obtain in the celestial machinery of the firmament—and then perhaps we may apprehend, how even the homeliest of our population, with nought but the Bible in his hand and in his breast the microcosm of his own spirit, may nevertheless discern so many adaptations between the directions of the one and the desires or even diseases of the other, as to arrest him with the well-warranted conviction of the same divinity having been concerned in the formation of both. And it may not be the conceit of a fanatical imagination, it may be sound and sober rationality —when, after the experience that this is the book whose informations have quelled his fears, and cleared away his perplexities, and lured him to the path of hopeful and progressive virtue, and renovated his whole character, and brought him to peace with God, and poured health and holiness into all the recesses of his moral constitution—it

may indeed be as valid an argument as ever philosopher has reared on the congruities of the external world, when, looking to the word and to its manifold congruities with the economy of his own nature, he is riveted into the assurance that verily God is in it of a truth.

34. We may here again observe that the elementary truths of the Gospel, are not like many of the truths of human science, in the pursuit of which we are carried onward by the stepping-stones of a long and successive argument. They are brought forth, more in the way of statement than in the way of demonstration. And it is not through a train of reasoning, that we gain for them the acceptance of a man's understanding—but more speedily and directly through the manifestation of them unto the man's conscience. So that if this faculty be asleep, the intimations of the Gospel are unheeded; and it is only when this faculty is awake, and the eye of the inner man is open to its own worthlessness, and sin is seen both in its deformity and its danger—that the tidings of salvation are apprehended to be true, and that, from the felt correspondence which there is between the offered remedy and the spiritual disease. But in order that this correspondence be felt, the disease must be felt—the mind must be so far recovered from its palsy, as to be recovered to a sense and a consciousness which really do not exist among the vast majority of this world's generations. And hence the vanity of all those logical and lengthened processes, which, though all triumphant on that march of investigation by which the studious

inquirer is guided to a right conclusion on the questions of Philosophy or Physics or Law, have never availed for the conversion of a human soul to the truth as it is in Jesus. That truth in fact often discovers itself to the mind of an unlettered peasant, on the bare intimation of it. There is a light which makes it manifest to his judgment, that may spring up immediately on the moment of its utterance; and by which too he attains, not a fanciful, but a sound and just and solid apprehension of it. Just grant in his behalf an organ of discernment, so purified of all those obstructions, which, in the shape of vain and carnal security, have blinded the perceptions of other men; and he may see himself in the actual characters of guilt and ungodliness which belong to him. And if a man but see his deficiencies, then by a single glance of the eye may he also see, how the doctrines of the Gospel and these deficiencies fit to one another; and thus, by an act of intuition, may a man without learning but with a conscience simply awakened, be made to perceive what no erudition and no elaborate contemplation of the articles of orthodoxy will make another man to perceive, whose conscience is unawakened. It is somewhat as if a fragment of any thing was broken away from some mass of which at one time it formed a part. All the hollows and all the protuberances on the one surface, will be in a state of most accurate adjustment with the corresponding protuberances and hollows upon the other. But it is not by looking, however intently, to one of these surfaces, that we shall come to ascertain the truth of this separation;

or, if reunion be possible, the place at which the reunion should be made. It is not by the most strict and scientific measurement of the various angles and unevennesses which have been made at the place of disruption, if we have only one side of the fracture to look upon. But if we have both sides to compare, the one with the other, we may, with the rapid inspection of a moment, perceive, what the labour of a whole life, expended on the inspection of one side, could not have enabled us to perceive. We may come at once to the belief, that here at one time a part was rent away—and this is the very fragment which has fallen off—and that on the rock from which it was detached, we behold its precise and certain counterpart—a conclusion to which we never should have come by the single contemplation of the precipice that is above us, but to which we come immediately, and as if by the light of intuition, on comparing it with the dissevered piece that is beneath us.

35. There are many high and heavenly things announced to us in the New Testament. And there are earthly things too, such as the hidden things of the heart, for the full disclosure of which the eye of conscience must be opened, that we may perceive how truly it is that the Bible tells us of our wayward and wilful alienation from God—and how righteously therefore He may hold us in the light of everlasting outcasts from the place where His honour dwelleth. It tells us of a great disruption that took place between earth and heaven —and points out the way in which a connexion may again be established between them. We may

look to these lofty announcements with the eye of scholarship. We may survey in all its parts and varieties that doctrine which has been brought forward to our view from heaven above—and even delight ourselves with the symmetry and the firm connexion of all its articles. We may weigh the import of every verse by the lexicon; and, looking out on the face of the record, be the most skilled of all the theologians, in the system of truth which it unfolds to us. But that our Christianity should become a matter of home and practical exercise, instead of a matter of distant speculation—or rather, that, beside its doctrinal we may obtain a view of its experimental evidence also, we must look to one side of the disruption as well as to the other of it—and if by the eye of conscience we are made to see ourselves, while by the eye of a simple perusal we see the word of Him who hath spoken to us from heaven—then, as if by the light of immediate revelation, may we be made to recognize, in the adaptation which obtains between unaided nature below and that doctrine which is offered to our contemplation from above, that we indeed have broken loose from God; but that this is the way in which the old alliance between earth and heaven will again be cemented together. The conviction is imparted by what we see of the celestial part unfolded in the Bible, so tallying with what we know of the terrestrial part that lies in the recesses of our own conscience. This is a conviction which does not wait on the tardy processes of human criticism—and while the laborious commentator has gazed for years upon the record, and never

felt the force of its personal application—the simple peasant who knows himself a sinner has found out the adjustments of Scripture with all the moral and spiritual necessities under which he labours—and so, without one ray of guidance from the literature of the schools, does he rejoice in his Bible, and has embraced its promises, and believes and most rationally believes in its truth.

36. It is thus that where there is a sense of guilt, a bare statement may do and do immediately, what, without that sense, cannot be done by the most ingenious and well-sustained demonstration. It is thus that the Gospel often finds a credence and an acceptation, when simply expounded among simple hearers who are practically in earnest, which is vainly attempted by a labouring and ambitious oratory among men whose fancies have been regaled, and whose feelings have been moved, and all whose reasoning faculties have been put on the play of their most congenial exercise while their consciences are in profoundest dormancy. Such men require a stream of argument or the flashes of imagery to keep them awake. The insipidity of a naked statement has no charms for them. Were it the statement of their deliverance from that which they actually dreaded, they would feel an interest—but they have no dread, and therefore it is that they seek for no deliverance. We stand in need of no literary attraction whatever, to secure a welcome admittance for the offer of a discharge from the debt which oppresses us, or of an unfailing cure for the disease under which we labour. But take away our personal interest

from such a communication,—let the subject of it be a scheme for the liquidation of the national debt, or an argument on the effect and virtues of a medicine—and that our attention may be engaged, there must be the exhibition of proofs and principles and processes of reasoning. It is much in the same way that the doctrine of the atonement may either be argumented in the terms of scholarship, or it may be stated in the terms of a simple affirmation. The argument may be listened to and liked by men who feel no personal concern, and therefore make no personal application. The statement may lodge, and with the power of its own inherent evidence, in the bosoms of men, who see the lineaments of truth in a doctrine, which bears upon it so many traces of correspondence with the needs and the fears and the aspirations of a nature which they know to be undone. And thus it is that faith standeth not in the wisdom of man. That power of demonstration which might make us converts to the philosophy that he expounds, will not make us converts to the Gospel that he preaches. Conversion to the truth as it is in Jesus, does not lie in the understanding being reached by a train of deductions; but it lies in the conscience being reached by the naked assertion of the truth. To go and preach the Gospel is not to go and argue it, but it is to go and proclaim it. The bare proclamation of it has often been followed up by an immediate belief of it—and it may be so still. The mere utterance of what the Gospel is, has frequently of itself prompted the firm conviction that the Gospel is true. The moment that

it was apprehended as to the meaning of it, has it bidden, by the authority of an evidence that was instantly and powerfully felt, an acquiescence in the truth of it. There may be a something in the doctrine without that so responds to the moral constitution within, and this respondency may be so close and so complete in all its adaptations, as to impress, and impress most rationally the belief of its being a true doctrine. This is the grand engine of christian proselytism. It is not we think either by wielding the arguments of subtle controversy, or by plying the analogies of skilful and varied illustration, that any effectual conviction is carried. It is by simply promulgating the doctrine, and confiding the acceptance of it to the way in which it meets and is at one with the knowledge that a man has of his own heart, and the sense by which he is touched of his own necessities. He cannot but award his confidence to a statement, which, however unaccompanied it may be with reasoning, reveals to him the intimacies of his own bosom—and thus it is that Christianity commends itself to the acceptance of its disciples, not through the medium of lengthened argument or lofty erudition—but simply through the word brought nigh unto them and the manifestation of its truth unto their conscience.

37. III. The proof on which we are now to enter is more strictly entitled to the appellation of experimental, than either of the two former. It differs from these very much as experience differs from observation. We are but engaged in the business of observation, when attending to the accordancy

which sits on the aspect of a profest revelation, between what we perceive to be its statements and what we feel to be the state of our own hearts; and, in particular, when attending to the joint testimony given by conscience and by scripture to the great moral depravation of our nature. And it is as much a work of observation, when attending to the accordancy which obtains, between the offered provisions of the Gospel and the felt wants of humanity—or, in particular, when attending to the way in which our natural fears of guilt are met by a remedy of most exquisite skilfulness—so that, while a free channel is opened up for the clemency of God to the most worthless of our kind—still the mercy thus lavished upon the world, instead of undermining that throne whereof justice and judgment are said to be the habitation, is a mercy that serves to vindicate and exalt the whole character and perfections of the Deity. In both these instances, we but take an observation. But in the instance now to be given, we undergo an experience. An event takes place of which ourselves are the subjects, an event in our own moral and spiritual history—by which, no doubt, a new scene of observation is opened to us; and we become the observers of an evidence that was before hidden from our eyes: But in the event itself there is an evidence, which of all others might well be denominated "experimental"—that event being a change in our mental state which proves in a direct manner the agency of God, and carries in it His attestation to the truth of that scripture which professes to have come from Him.

38. To understand the nature of this event, we may remark, that long before it has taken place, we may, if not convinced by the verity, at least be imprest by the verisimilitudes of the christian revelation. The most unlettered peasant, with no other elements than a conscience and a common sense, is capable of being thus impressed. And his attention may be powerfully interested long before his conviction has been gained—or long before he has reached that faith which is unto salvation. For anterior to this, he may feel all the urgencies of fear, and of desire, and of a strong personal interest in a question which involves the favour of God and the fate of eternity. He may long for the repose of settled convictions on the subject; and, for this purpose, may cast about for a more overpowering light and a more satisfying evidence than any which he has yet found, in the course of his anxious and repeated endeavours after the solution of his everlasting destiny. It is very conceivable, that, as the Father of his spirit is the great object whom in all this process of desire and of strenuousness he is in quest of, he may, in addition to the perusal of that which claims to be His word, lift the aspirations of his soul towards Him, for guidance and aid, in a pursuit which so deeply interests himself. In other words he may add prayer to those other mental exercises, by which he is labouring after the settlement of that question upon which hinges his eternity; and it were interesting to know how the Christianity that results from such a process, instead of a reverie or a fanatical imagination, might be indeed the con-

viction of a manly and rational and enlightened piety.

39. We have already explained the way in which an answer to prayer may be given—and yet without violence to the operation of any visible and secondary causes*—how the accomplishment that is wanted may be brought about, not against, but with the use of the ordinary means—how in this way neither a special providence nor the answer to prayer may imply any invasion whatever on the generality or the constancy of Nature's processes: and thus it is, that, if the object of our earnest and persevering entreaty, be a right belief and an adequate knowledge, of all that relates to the friendship of God, and the well-being of our eternity—the answer may be given, and yet not one sequence connected with the phenomena of the human understanding be at all deranged or intercepted. More particularly, that sequence, by which it is that a sound belief comes in the train only of a sufficient evidence, may be most fully and scrupulously observed. And the terminating conviction, instead of some deceitful or visionary glare, may in fact be the result of certain manifested proofs, that could both be apprehended by the intellect of the inquirer, and could be alleged and vindicated by him in the hearing of his fellow-men.

40. A miracle is an event that is at variance with the regular and ascertained processes of nature; and the conviction which is thus awarded to an inquirer, in answer to prayer, is not a

* See our "Natural Theology," Book V. Chap. iii.

miracle. It is not borne in upon him like a resistless and indescribable impression. There is not the visitation of a preternatural light, or the whisper of a preternatural voice. It is not given to him like the prophetic inspiration of old—nor is there in it that gleam of illumination, which would almost assimilate the belief of a Christian to the spectral and superstitious fancy of those who take counsel of dreams, and are credulous of apparitions. There is, we are persuaded, an efficacy in the humble prayer for light, of him who has been visited by a moral earnestness to do as he ought and to believe as he ought; but just as the answer of other prayer is accomplished, not against the use of means, but by the use of means —so the belief that issues from the prevailing suit of him who hath mingled his prayers with his perusal of the word, is not a belief that is without the light of evidence, but a belief that is purely and legitimately the effect of it.

41. To be convinced how it is, that one may be made to believe in answer to his prayer, and yet that the belief may be rational and upon evidence—let us only think of the effect, were a tenfold power given to the faculty of sight. Then a whole world of novelties, that had before escaped all notice, might at once be ushered into observation—new objects altogether, and new appearances and shades of colour in objects, that before, in a gross and general way had been quite familiar to us. New convictions of things would instantly spring up in the person who had thus been visited; and, instead of any lack of evidence, it would be

evidence at first hand—strong at least as that of ocular demonstration, and impressing a confidence upon the mind as well warranted as that which we repose in the intimations of our senses. There would on this supposition be the revelation of many new facts and new objects; but our belief in their reality would be as distant as possible from a rash or misguided fanaticism. It would be vision with the eye of the body, and not the vagary of a heated imagination at all. Neither would the belief now engendered, be the fruit of any new facts or phenomena, now for the first time brought near to him. It would be solely the fruit of a now clearer and more penetrating inspection, cast by the medicated eye upon old objects. It would be the simple result of a look upon pre-existent nature, but of a look more powerful and perspicuous than we had ever been able to cast upon it before.

42. Now the same renovation that we have just supposed to take place on the eye of the body, may take place on the eye of consciousness—on that eye whose office it is, to look inwardly upon the tablet of the heart, and to take notice of the various characters and lineaments that are thereupon engraven. In virtue of our moral earnestness, and as the fruit of those efforts and of those prayers to which this earnestness hath given rise, some film of pride or of prejudice that had before obstructed the view of our own character might now be cleared away. We might in consequence be now favoured with a reach of discernment that we never before had among the arcana of our own spirit. We see nothing that was not there before;

but we see what to us was invisible before. It is to the pre-existent nature within his breast, that he now looks to certain antecedent realities, from which the veil that was formerly upon his heart is now taken away. Let the power of consciousness but be augmented; and there is nought of phantasy whatever in those new truths which now address themselves to the faculty of internal observation. They are not new in respect of existence; they are only new in respect to our knowledge of their existence—recognised by the mental eye now purified and made more powerful than before, and to the reality of which, therefore, we may have in every way as good evidence as we have to the reality of our own thoughts.

43. All this might take place, and as yet there be no evidence evolved in behalf of a professed revelation. But only let us conceive that the same mental eye which can now look with more full and accurate discernment on the internal tablet of the heart, can also look with better discernment than before on the tablet of a written record. Just let us conceive one of its own prayers to be answered—"open mine eyes to behold the wondrous things contained in the Book of thy law." We do not ask for any revelation of new things. We only ask for the power of a clearer discernment as to the things that are already written. Many of our general readers must be sensible of a certain repulsive obscurity, that overspreads, more especially, the doctrinal pages of the New Testament —a kind of mysterious or hieroglyphical aspect, through the disguises of which, they have not yet

been able to penetrate—a most singular phraseology, alike remote from the language of common life and from the language of general literature—a sort of obsolete and exploded nomenclature, that bears upon it the stamp of centuries, as unlike as possible to the phraseology in which those truths are conveyed that command an intellectual homage from the philosophers of this lettered and cultivated age—an impracticable jargon, they may even feel tempted to call it, that is music to the popular ear, and behind which there lie certain recondite doctrines that can only be addressed with effect to the credulity of the vulgar or popular understanding. This is the actual film of prejudice that obstructs the mental eye of many, the most enlightened in science and in all liberal accomplishments. Now grant but the removal of this film—so that the weight and the significancy of such things as are written in scripture, might become palpable to the eye of the understanding. In its own language, let the understanding be opened to understand the scriptures; and still there is nothing perceived by the thus clarified eye of the mind, but such matters as were antecedently spread out on the field of this profest revelation. There might be nought of illusion and of imagination in this process; and the only change of which the man is at all conscious in reference to this book, is, that he now apprehends the sense of it—a matter, of which he may have just as good title to be confident, as he has when altogether sensible whether he understands or not any of the compositions of ordinary authorship.

44. Now, let us attend to the effect of this

simple change. If there be any truth in the first and second of the experimental evidences that we have attempted to explain, it will instantly make them manifest. For the purpose of being impressed by these evidences, there must be a comparison of two tablets—one the inner tablet of the heart, and the other the outer tablet of a profest revelation. If we have no distinct perception of either, then we have not the materials before us on which a comparison can be made. But suppose, that, by our increased faculty of vision, each becomes visible—and then the accordancy between them, if such an accordancy do really obtain, becomes visible also. The one might now stand forth to our newly enlightened discernment as an accurate counterpart of the other. And this perception coming to us, not in the train of any logical process of reasoning, not as the fruit of human argument or human explanation, but simply and directly from the more penetrating consciousness that we now have of our own heart upon the one hand, and from the more powerful intelligence wherewith we now view the positions of the written record upon the other—such a perception arising in this way, after a season perhaps spent in the prayers and the efforts of great moral earnestness, might pass, not merely into a vivid and instantaneous, but also into a most warrantable conviction, that the great and unseen Being who all the while has been the object of our many aspirations—that He whose eye is upon all the characteristics of that microcosm which is within the heart of man, that it was He alone who constructed that volume in which we

now behold so minute and marvellous a reflection of it.

45. We must here observe as formerly, that by this process the caprice and the variety of unbridled imagination are altogether precluded. The man who is the subject of it, only sees better than he did before, those permanent and indelible characters that stand out in the written record; and he sees better than before, the stable identities of human nature. It is not among illusions, but altogether among realities that he is conversant; and it is out of the comparison between one set of these realities and another, that the evidence in question emerges. Out of such a process as this, it is not a fantastic but a sober and intelligible Christianity that is evolved—a Christianity restricted to the things which are written in a now unalterable book; and to those enduring attributes of the heart and of the will, by which abiding and universal humanity is characterized. We believe that in all ages and nations, there have been specimens of Christianity formed in this way; and, so far from that interminable and fantastic variety which is apprehended in the process of sentiment that we have now endeavoured to explain, we believe, that the thus originated Christianity of a genuine convert in the farthest outskirts of the species, whether at Greenland or in the Islands of the South Sea, will be found by enlightened observers to be in substantial agreement with each other, and substantially the same with the Christianity of the Archbishop Fenelon or of the profound and philosophical Pascal.

46. But to satisfy us that at every step the evidence is valid, and that there is no delusion at any one point or turn of the process—let us have recourse to a parallel in nature. We have seen a distant land on the other side of a bay or arm of the sea, stretching along the horizon, and too remote for the observation of its scenery. But the power of vision may be strengthened by a telescope; and they are not illusions surely, but stable and antecedent realities—which we are made by the telescope to perceive. Suppose different individuals to have the advantage of this help to their vision,—still each would behold the same things, and, instead of the phantasmata of an aërial imagination, the eyes of all would rest upon and recognize the very same objects—the actual houses and spires and fields and forests of a landscape that had now for the first time started into sudden, yet sure and satisfactory revelation. But this is not enough to complete the analogy. We know the power of that chemical preparation which receives the name of a sympathetic ink. By it the impression of lines and characters and pictures may be made on paper, but an impression which in the first instance shall be invisible, and shall remain so, till, by the application of a certain chemical agent, it can be made to stand ostensibly out in the proper form and colouring that belong to it. Let this be done on the apparent blank of some tablet which we have in our hand; and only suppose that what is evolved in consequence, is the accurate representation of that very landscape which the telescope has just

disclosed. Let the picture now made manifest for the first time by one agent, be the precise counterpart, in all its features and lineaments, to the distant scene now made manifest by the other; and the conclusion is irresistible, that he who drew the picture had his eye upon the landscape, or copied from him who had direct and original observation of the scene. The conclusion is truly a sound one; but not more sound than that of him, who, in virtue of some new power of discernment, can perceive in the book of a professed revelation, an accurate reflection of the character of his own heart—who, a stranger before both to the characters of the outer and to those of the inner tablet, now beholds them standing out in visible manifestation, and can note their perfect respondency the one to the other. The inference is valid, and such as to stamp entire rationality on the faith of many an unlettered Christian—when he feels how that He who constructed the Bible had preternatural insight into the mysteries of his own spirit—that the Architect of this wondrous volume was no other than the Architect of man's moral economy, and who alone could pourtray the hidden man of the heart, and bring out to view the secrets of that mechanism which He Himself did frame.

47. Now, it may be thought, that, by this process however real, there is nothing gained additional to the first and the second experimental evidence, which we have already endeavoured to expound—that by it we are only made to see the accordancy between the now understood statements of the Bible, and the now felt or perceived state of

our own hearts; and also to see the accordancy between the provisions which are addressed to us there, and those moral or spiritual necessities of which we have now been made sensible—that still we have not advanced any further than to these two kinds of evidence; nor is it seen immediately, how a third evidence can be founded on that peculiar method by which it is that men are conducted to the former ones.

48. But the truth is, that this peculiar method bears upon itself another impress of the divinity. And that, not merely because light hath been made to arise in the mind by a way altogether distinct from any of the processes of human teaching, but also, in the very way that is specified and laid down in the book itself. Being "renewed in knowledge;" being "called out of darkness into marvellous light;" having the "eyes opened to behold;" having the "secrets of the heart made manifest;" being struck with the conviction of inward want and worthlessness on the one hand, and also on the other with the efficiency of the proposed application—these all point to a great event at the outset of a man's real and decided Christianity: and, should the event happen to any individual, there is to him a correspondence between the announcements in the book, and what to himself is a most interesting passage of his own history, which might serve still more to evince the powerful and the presiding intelligence by which it is animated. What it affirms is, not a something which is within us, but a something which will befal us—not, as under the first and implicitly too under the second evi-

dence, not a description of our present state, but the actual prediction or rather fulfilment of a promise in our future history. The divination in fact is heightened into a prophecy. "He that seeketh findeth"—this, if at length verified upon us, and verified in the very peculiar way that we have already explained, will lead us to the view of another coincidence than any which we have yet specified.—Not a coincidence between the statements of the book, and the state of our own moral economy; not a coincidence between the provisions which it offers, and the felt necessities of our actual condition—but a coincidence between what to us is a most interesting prophecy or promise, and the living or actual fulfilment of it in our own persons—a proof most effective individually to ourselves; and which, multiplied as it is in the frequent and unceasing repetitions of it throughout all the countries of Christendom, might furnish a general and enlightened observer with the very strongest materials, for the demonstration of the reality of our faith.

49. The event which we now suppose to have taken place in the mental history of an inquirer, supplies him with a great deal more than a mere introduction to the first and second experimental evidences. It is in itself a distinct and additional evidence. There is even more in it than another species of accordancy beside either of those which come under the two former heads of this argument—not an accordancy between what the Bible says we are, and what we discern ourselves to be; not an accordancy between what the Bible offers as a remedy, and we feel that we require; but an

accordancy between what the Bible says will happen to its disciples, and what they experience in themselves to happen actually. But over and above this we behold, in this great spiritual transaction, the characters, not merely of the divine prescience, but of the divine agency. For it comes as the fulfilment of a promise, and in answer to prayer; and so gives the irresistible conviction, that the power and the will and the knowledge and the faithfulness of the living God are all concerned in it. It bears every mark of a special interposition on the part of Him who "commands the light to shine out of darkness," who hath promised to "draw near unto those who draw near unto Him," and tells the sinner who awakens at His call that "Christ shall give him light." And yet special though the interposition be, if by a miracle we mean a contravention to some known sequence or law of nature, it stands distinguished from an ordinary miracle. The change is too far back for being a miraculous one, in the commonly understood sense of that term.* It takes place, not among the known processes of the intellect, but in the powers of the intellect—at the margin of separation between the known and the unknown, if not behind it. We are made conscious, by this mental change, of brighter perceptions than before; but all our trains of perception and reasoning proceed in their wonted order; and our faculties, now gifted with a clearer discernment of scripture than before, are nevertheless similarly exercised in the study of this book to what they are in the study of

* See "Natural Theology," Book V., Chap. iii., Art. 26.

all human authorship. If by a miracle be meant that by which a different consequent emerges from the same antecedent as before—then we have not the means of detecting a full miracle in that gracious change, by which transition is made from the darkness of nature to the light of the Gospel. For the change takes place on the first or remotest term of the progression that is visible to us. With the senses of the mind made clearer; and our first perceptions, whether of the Bible or of ourselves, more luminous than before, we may be said to start from new antecedents—while after this, all the mental phenomena, observable by us, strictly conform to the laws of the mental philosophy. Neither is there any new creation of objective light, for the purpose of making the convert see. The change is an organic one on his seeing faculties; or rather, the removal of an obstruction which prevents its ingress into the soul. God, in this work of illumination, does not command the light to exist; but he commands the light, the pre-existent light, to shine out of darkness, or to shine through the veil by which it was before intercepted.

50. But he who is the subject of this visitation may be altogether unable to philosophize on the grounds of that conviction in which it has issued; or on the steps by which he has been led to it. The conviction, however, is not the less clear or warrantable on that account.* He who has thus been made to see, sees upon evidence as sound as

* See in our former volume the distinction made by us between the direct process, and the reflex view that might be taken of it in the act of reasoning.

to himself it is satisfactory; and could we by any means be made to know what passes in the minds of others, as intimately as we know and feel what passes in our own minds—we might from the history of every manifestation, gather a strong argument, of a peculiar but very conclusive kind for the truth of Christianity. Such a general observation as this, however, were not very practicable; and therefore it is the more fortunate, that this evidence, which it were so difficult to collect from the history of others, gathers in brightness every day along the line of the individual history of each real Christian. And this experimental evidence is perpetually growing. There is not merely an agreement between the declarations of the book and his own experience, in the great event that marks and that constitutes in fact the outset of that new moral career upon which he has entered; but there is a sustained agreement between its declarations, and the evolutions of his mental or spiritual history in all time coming. There is a busy interchange of correspondence and of mutual confirmation going on, between what he finds and what it says. There is thus a growing confidence that he attaches to this book—just as he would attach a growing confidence to the prophet who had adventured himself on the futurities of his own personal story; and, in favour of whom, every new day of his life had brought round some accomplishment or other. And so it is, that even the unlettered peasant may receive an impression of the truth of this book, from the truth of its manifold agreements with his own intimate experience.

He may recognize throughout its pages, not merely the shrewd discernment of what he is, but the prophetic discernment of what he will be along the successive stages of his preparation for heaven. And, with every new experience of the way in which its descriptions tally with the details of his own history—as in the account, for example, that it gives of the exercises of the spirit, whether under the afflictions of life or the assaults of temptation—or in the fulfilments of prayer—or in the facilities that open up, for a still more prosperous cultivation of the heart, along the path of an advancing excellence—or in the light which it casts over the ways and the arrangements of providence in the world—there redounds from all these, and from many more which cannot be specified, the glory of an increasing evidence for the truth of that volume, whose insight, not only reaches to the penetralia of the human character, but lays open the secrets and the dark places that lie in the womb of futurity. This is truly an accumulating evidence. It brightens with every new fulfilment, and every new step in the journey of a Christian's life; and, amid the incredulity and derision of those who have no sympathy either with his convictions or his hopes—still we hold that the faith, thus originated and thus sustained, is the faith not of fanaticism but of sound philosophy; that his experimental Christianity rests, in fact, on a basis as firm as experimental science; that there is neither delusion in the growing lustre of his convictions through life, nor delusion in the concluding triumphs and ecstasy of his death-bed.

51. In these various ways then might Christianity manifest its own truth to the conscience of every man. When making demonstration of human guilt, there might be such an accordancy with all that nature felt of its own guiltiness—when making demonstration of the offered atonement, there might be such an accordance with all that nature felt of its own necessities, as first to draw the attention, and then to compel the belief of all who were thus arrested. The felt force of the disease on the one hand, and the felt suitableness of the remedy on the other, might land them, and rightfully land them in such a consummation. It is not that viewed as two naked propositions, they can evince or establish the general truth of the system which contains them. But they are variously and repeatedly set forth in the sacred record; and this gives rise to innumerable touches of descriptive accuracy, to a multiple and sustained harmony between the inward tablet of the heart and the outward tablet of a professed revelation. There is an evidence afforded by the agreement between a complex tally and its alike complex but accurately resembling counterpart; and there may be a like evidence in the countless adaptations which obtain between a supernal application from heaven, and the human nature beneath, upon which it has descended. And beside these, there are so many other symptoms or signatures of Truth which the conscience can lay hold of. It can discern the apparent honesty of any communication. It can take cognizance of all that marks the worth or the simplicity of its bearers. It can feel and be

impressed by its aspect of undoubted sacredness. It can distinguish the voice of a God, or of an ambassador from God, in its promulgation of a righteous law, and in the sustained dignity and effect wherewith it challenges a rightful authority. It can perceive all which is in and about the message to be in keeping with the high original which it claims; and, whether it looks to the profoundness of its wisdom or to the august and unviolable purity of its moral character, it can perceive when these evidences are so enhanced and multiplied on a professed embassy from heaven, as to announce its descent from a God of knowledge and a God of holiness.

52. We may now understand what is meant by the self-evidencing power of the Bible. It is that in virtue of which it announces its own authority to the understanding of the reader. It is not only the bearer of its own contents, but is the bearer also of its own credentials. It is by the external and historical evidences of Christianity, that we are enabled to maintain its cause against the infidelity of lettered and academic men. But it is another evidence that recommends it to the acceptance of the general population. Their belief in scripture, and we think all saving belief whatever, is grounded on the instant manifestation of its truth unto the conscience. And thus, without the aid of sensible miracles in the present age, and without even the scholarship which ascertains and verifies the miracles of a past age, do we hold that the divinity of the Bible may be read and recognized in its own pages, and that in virtue of an evidence

which might be addressed with effect to the moral nature of man in any quarter of the world.

53. But what gives complete and conclusive effect to this evidence is the revelation of the Spirit. For the understanding of this, there is one thing of prime importance to be attended to. The Spirit when He acts as an enlightener, presents us with no new revelation of His own. He only shines on that revelation which is already given in the Bible. He brings no new truths from afar, He but discloses the truths of that word which is nigh unto us. It is true that He opens our eyes; but it is to behold the wondrous things contained in this book. It is true that He lifts up a veil; but it is not the veil which hides from our view the secrets of any distant or mysterious region. He taketh away the veil from our hearts; and we, made to behold that which is within, and also to behold that which is without—become alive to the force and fulness of that evidence which lies in the manifold adjustments between them—convinced at once of the magnitude of our own sin, and of the suitableness and reality of the offered salvation. In this process there is no direct announcement made to us by the Spirit of God. There is neither a voice nor a vision; no whisper to the ear of the inner man—no gleam either of a sensible or spiritual representation. There is light it is true shining out of darkness; but it is the light of the Bible, now made luminous, reflected from the tablet of conscience, now made visible. It is not a light shining direct upon us from the heavenly objects themselves; but it is a light shining on a

medium of proof by which we are made sensible of their reality. He who has been visited by this manifestation can say, I was blind but now I see. He may remember the day when a darkness inscrutable seemed to hang over those mystic—those then unmeaning passages of the Bible, which he now perceives to be full of weight and full of significancy. He may remember the day when, safe and satisfied with himself, he neither saw the extent and the purity of God's lofty commandment, nor his own distance and deficiency therefrom—though now burdened with the conscious magnitude of his guilt, he both sees the need of a Saviour, and feels His preciousness. He is now brought within full view of the argument that we have laboured to unfold; and the transition, the personal or the historical transition, which himself has undergone is to his own mind a most impressive argument. It forms to him an experimental evidence of the truth of Christianity—and may be regarded as another appeal to his conscience or to his consciousness in its favour. He has become a Christian in the true sense and significancy of the term. The Gospel hath entered his mind in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. He rejoices in the hope of its bright fulfilments; and, untutored though he be in the scholarship of its literary or argumentative evidences, he, though of humble education and humble circumstances, can give a reason of his hope.

54. It should not be difficult to understand, how, under this process of spiritual illumination, men, in all ages or parts of the world, the most

widely distant from each other, are nevertheless introduced to one and the same Christianity. The Spirit does not make known a different religion to each; but He manifests the same great truths to every understanding—the stable characteristics of human nature, and the no less stable doctrines of revelation, fixed and handed down to us in an imperishable written record. This will explain the mutual recognitions, the felt affinities, the perfect community of soul and sentiment that obtain between the truly regenerated of all countries and all periods. A christian peasant of Scotland, were the barrier of their diverse language removed, could enter with fullest sympathy, into the feelings and the views and the mental exercises of a christianized Hottentot in South Africa. On the same principle, he would feel the consent of a common intelligence and common sensibility with his author—when reading the pages of Augustine, or any other writer on practical Christianity, who, like him, underwent a transition from the darkness of nature to the marvellous light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Were the materials for the observation within our reach, it were most interesting to compare the converse between two devoted Christians brought together from the remotest places of the earth, and that, for example, of a Mahometan Moor with a Mahometan Persian—the first two having the Bible as a common subject of reference; the second two the Alcoran. Each would sympathize with the other of his own kind; but a mighty lesson might be educed from the extent and the character of their respective sympathies. In the

one, we should behold a community of the same ablutions, the same abstinences, the same external observations. In the other we should behold a community, of a far higher kind, of soul with soul; a coalescence between the thoughts and affections and principles of the inner man. The votaries of other religions may have one baptism. They are the votaries of the Christian religion alone who have one Lord, that dwells in them and makes them one both with Himself and with each other; one faith, that, working by love, has the entire mastery over both their intellectual and their moral nature —and, subordinating the whole heart and history to the same great principle, begets that likeness or identity between all the members however scattered of Christ's spiritual family, which is expressed in our theological systems by the communion of the saints. They are bound together by the tie of their common sympathies, and their common hopes; and, in the topics of converse suggested by these, they have an interest which never fails.

CHAPTER IV.

On the portable Character of the Evidence for the Truth of Christianity.

1. The epithet of *portable*, though alike applicable to the moral the experimental and the doctrinal evidence for the truth of Christianity, we should

not have ventured to adopt in this place—had it not been previously sanctioned by our admirable friend Joseph John Gurney,* whose writings have contributed so much to the defence and illustration of our common faith.

2. The meaning of it is, that, unlike to the historical or literary evidence, which, as requiring a higher amount of scholarship and education than is found to obtain throughout the general mass of society, can only be addressed to a limited class of readers—the portable evidence, on the contrary, may be borne to every door, and find an opening for itself to the heart and the conscience even of the most unlettered of our species. Yet it is not by a reflex or philosophical exposition of this evidence—it is not by such an exposition of it as we have attempted to give in the two previous chapters, that it is made to obtain an entrance into the minds of the common people. It works a way for itself there, and there achieves its main triumphs through the direct preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is while the minister unfolds the contents of the Christian message, though without one word from him on the credentials of the message, that the best and weightiest of these credentials do of themselves find access to the popular understanding. It is thus that the subject matter of Christianity, instinct in itself with evidence, may, when simply told and explained, be left to vindicate its own authority; and does in fact carry its own proper weight, amounting to absolute

* See his interesting little work on the "Portable Evidence of Christianity."

and entire ascendancy, over the convictions of the most ignorant and unlearned hearers. And this mental consent of theirs is not fancy but faith —the real substance of belief and not the semblance of it only—the result of a process as legitimate and as logical, as any of those by which philosophy has been led to her soundest conclusions—a belief resting upon evidence presented in the message, though not pointed to or once named to them by the bearer of the message—an evidence recognized by the people though perhaps never reasoned on by the minister.

3. And this self-evidence which lies in the matter of revelation, and makes it so applicable to the unlearned within, makes it equally applicable to the rudest and most unlettered tribes without the limits of Christendom. In the power and effect of the internal evidence we behold the rationale of a missionary enterprise—the agents of which, with but the Bible in their hands and the spirit of prayer in their hearts, are in a state of full equipment for operating on the moral nature of man in every quarter of the globe. They are in possession of a key to all consciences; and, without the power either of working present miracles or of demonstrating to the apprehension of savages the certainty of past miracles, they, nevertheless, are in possession of vouchers to authenticate their mission, and by which to make full proof of their apostleship.

4. Before expatiating further either on the one or the other application, the evidence itself may again be shortly stated, even that evidence by

which the messengers of the Gospel might pioneer an access for Christianity to the consciences of the men of the whole earth—whether to the most sunken in the depths of ignorance and poverty at home—or to the farthest removed in the wilds of distant and yet unexplored barbarism.

5. Each entire man has a conscience within his breast which tells him of the difference between right and wrong, and tells him somewhat of the God who planted it there; and each has a consciousness which tells him of his own delinquencies against this law of moral nature, and that, in the eye of him who ordained that law, he himself is an offender. Let the word which tells him the same things lay hold of his attention, and the recognized harmony between the lessons of the one and of the other—the felt echo in his own heart to the intimations of a message thus brought nigh unto him—the response given from within to the voice heard from without—will fix and perpetuate his attention the more; and all the discoveries made by this process of a joint or double manifestation, will have, at least, the authority of two witnesses to confirm them. Let us conceive that the ministrations of the spirit are superadded to the ministrations of the word, and that he who is the subject of these, obtains, in consequence, a clearer and fuller view both of himself and of the Bible. Under such a discipline as this, all his convictions, and with his convictions, his fears must grow apace; the feeble and incipient notices which first drew his regards, might now be to him the loud denunciations of terror; all that is said of the evil of sin

and of the vengeance which awaits the sinner under a holy and unchangeable lawgiver, might have tenfold greater weight and significancy than before; and he be haunted in consequence, by the thought of an angry God and an undone eternity. In the midst of these disquietudes which so agitate and engross his soul, let us further imagine that the same Bible which told him of sin, now tells him of salvation; and that the same spirit from on high which irradiated the one revelation and made it stand forth as if in illuminated characters of greater dread and majesty than before, casts a bright but pleasing irradiation over the other also. In answer to the prayers of this tost and tempest-driven supplicant, seeking for rest but hitherto finding none, let the revelation of grace be at length made as palpable as before was the revelation of terror. Let him now be helped to take a view of redemption, in its characters and in its footsteps—of that great movement made from heaven to earth, and the object of which was to reconcile the outcast world and recall its wandering generations to the family of God. Let the law have acted its part as a schoolmaster in bringing him to Christ; and, in the history of Him who came, charged with the overtures of peace, and went about doing good continually, let him learn the possibility at least that there is an outlet of escape from condemnation—that there is still a refuge from despair. Let this dawning hope ripen more and more towards a full assurance, as he becomes more intelligent in the doctrines of the Saviour, and listens to His repeated declarations of good will to the chil-

dren of men. Above all let him be made to know the purposes of His death; and his mind be opened to behold the great mystery of the atonement, the union of heaven's justice with heaven's clemency. It is then that the scales fall from his eyes; and in the propitiated pardon of the Gospel, blending the honours of a vindicated sacredness with the freest and fullest proclamations of mercy, he at length finds that alone remedy by which the misgivings of his guilty nature can be met and satisfied. By one and the same manifestation, even the spectacle of the cross, his confidence, though a transgressor of the law, is restored; while his reverence for the law's authority is exalted—and, in the transition which he now makes to peace and holiness, he learns what it is to mix trembling with his mirth, to combine with the security of the Christian faith the diligence of the Christian practice. But his experience does not stop at this great event of his history, which might well be termed the turning point of his salvation. It rather only begins here; and, along the career of the new creature in Jesus Christ our Lord, with the power of sin broken, and a constantly increasing delight in that law which was formerly his terror, the descriptions of the book so tally with the findings of his own heart and his own history, as to multiply the evidence upon him that Christianity is divine. Under the teaching of the Bible which he daily reads, and of the Spirit which he daily prays for, these signatures of heaven in the whole religion of the New Testament become every day more legible and more convincing—till

a belief never to be shaken be fully established within him, that verily God is in it of a truth.

6. Now throughout the whole of this schooling, we never once come into converse with the historical or the literary evidence for the truth of the Gospel. The aids of a critical and controversial authorship, with its scientific apparatus of polyglotts and grammars and lexicons, are never called for. These mysteries of a higher scholarship are beyond the reach of our common people—who yet, with no other apparatus than that of a Bible and of a conscience, are capable of being introduced to the mysteries of a still surer and more satisfying revelation. There is a process by which the things that are hidden from the wise and the prudent, might be abundantly made known to the veriest babes in the learning of this world. Let them have but Bibles in their hands, and consciences in their bosoms—then, with that power from on high which operates on these and is given to our prayers, we are in possession of the adequate means for the saving illumination even of the humblest and homeliest of men. In other words—without either the gift of miracles or of profound erudition or philosophy, we might be in a state of full equipment for the christianization of the world.

7. There is a twofold application that might be made of this subject. First, the encouragement derived from it to efforts in behalf of the education of our own countrymen—secondly, the like encouragement to efforts for the civilization of the nations beyond the limits of Christendom. The philosophy of missions in their two great branches,

the Home and the Foreign, receives its best vindication on the ground of the self-evidencing power of the Bible—as portable, therefore, as the truths of the Bible are portable; and we hope it will not be deemed an unreasonable digression if, at this stage of our argument, we now advert to the likelihoods of both.

8. I. In the Gospel then there is a sure testimony, "making wise the simple"—the line whereof goeth out "through all the earth," and its "words to the end of the world."* This diffusive property signifies more than the property of stretching to a far distance. To overspread implies a filling up, as well as an expansion. That Christianity go completely through all the earth, it must not only be carried forth to its remotest extremities—there must be no intermediate vacancies left, else the knowledge of the Lord does not cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. For a thorough fulfilment of missionary work, we must not only expound, we must also pervade. The object is not merely to enlarge the borders of Christendom; it is to reclaim the interior wastes of Christendom itself—and, for this purpose, we must visit the desolate places that are within as well as those that are without the territory. When we hear of a missionary enterprise, our thoughts would carry us afar to the remotest isles of Paganism, or to those vast and yet unexplored continents, which have not been penetrated by the light of revelation. It is not recollected, that, beside these unvisited

* Psalm xix. 4.

regions at a distance, and still under the shadow of death, we have unassailed fastnesses at home—whole masses of irreligion and deepest spiritual apathy, whether in the putrid lanes of our cities or in the remote hamlets and villages of our country parishes—thousands of imperishable spirits of men living at our own doors, who personally are within the sight of churches and the hearing of church-bells, yet morally are at as great a distance, not from the spirit and power only but from the knowledge of the Gospel, as if they had been born and lived all their days in the wilds of Tartary. In the splendour of the distant enterprise, we are apt to overlook these; and, with imaginations fired by the project of an attack on the primeval seats of idolatry in other countries and other climes, the claims of our own kindred and our own countrymen are apt to be forgotten.

9. Now, when we speak of the portable evidence of Christianity, we mean that evidence by which it can reach the consciences and the conduct even of the unlettered multitude. We distinguish it from that other evidence, the understanding of which requires a science and a scholarship that are confined to the few. It is that in virtue of which we are placed in circumstances for addressing with effect the hitherto most untutored of our own population, though sunk in deepest ignorance—as well as those rudest of nature's children, those wanderers of the desert, where the sound of the Gospel was never heard. All men have in them the common faculty of a conscience that suggests the same notions of right and wrong—the same

sense of their moral want and their moral worthlessness to all. And Christianity has in it the property of an adaptation to the conscience by which it might commend itself to all, and so find proselytes for itself in every quarter of the globe. It is this self-evidencing power of the Bible which makes its doctrines portable to every understanding, and its lessons portable to every heart. And it not only explains the full and final entrance of Christianity into the mind, when, in the moment of conversion it is at last admitted as the settled belief of the inquirer. It also explains the welcome of its first approaches; for the same characteristics of this religion which seen fully at the last secure for it the full conviction of the mind, though seen but dimly at the first, give it a certain creditable aspect even at the outset—so that, though not received all at once, it may still be entertained even at the very first; and we have no doubt that this operates most powerfully, as an ingredient in that facility of access, which the bearers of Christianity experience, when, passing from house to house, they make offer of their christian services, and announce the errand on which they have come, of doing all which they can and are permitted to do, for the moral and christian good of the families.

10. And accordingly what is the experience of those who make this attempt—who go forth among the households of the poorer classes, not with the offer of silver and gold for of such they may have none, but with the offer of their devotions through the week and of their christian advice upon the Sabbath—whose only errand is as the messengers of

Christianity—the bearers of its comfort to their sick and dying, of its lessons whether of warning or encouragement to themselves and to their children? The pleasing discovery of which every day is now multiplying the instances is, that, with the exception perhaps of not one in a hundred, the religious philanthropist finds a cordial admittance at every door —that, generally and almost universally, there is a welcome and a good will attendant upon his footsteps, a grateful response to the overtures wherewith he is charged; and, though he comes in what might be held a somewhat invidious capacity, as a reformer of their habits and a reformer of their lives, that nevertheless he makes good his entry not into their habitations only but into their hearts; and that, if he but concentrate his attentions on a territory small enough for becoming the acquaintance of all the families, he will earn, as the fruit of his moral and benevolent assiduities, the confidence and the affection of all. We do not say that he will gain over the convictions of all; but, by dint of his fidelity and honest friendship in the midst of them, he will very nearly gain over the kindness of all. He may not secure a full acceptance for Christianity. But to a great extent he will secure at least a hearing for it. Such at least is the common finding of those, who have attempted in a sustained way, to make a lodgment for the ministrations of the Gospel in the churchless villages and before unentered city recesses of our own land—teeming with unknown and hitherto neglected myriads of immortal creatures, among whom Christianity has been suffered to wane into

extinction; but who, nevertheless, have still the human feelings and the human consciences by which to find a way to them. There is a natural cordiality almost with all, in virtue of which the bearers of the truth are welcomed, when, in the prosecution of this their moral and benevolent enterprise, they make their descent upon the families.* But this alone would not suffice, but for that credibility in the truth itself, which introduces it first to the attention, and then wins for it the full and final acceptance of the mind; and, to meet this, there is a natural conscience in all, which, made awake and intelligent by the Spirit of God, can take knowledge of the word that is spoken, and do homage to the divinity which is therein manifested. Both these, the natural cordiality and the natural conscience, may be regarded as parts of human nature by which provision is made for the access of Christianity to the people; or, by which, Christianity is rendered so portable —both throughout the habitations, and into the hearts of men. The conjunction of these two forms a mighty encouragement to all missionary work. It is with the second of these that the consideration of the internal evidence has properly to do. But the first, as not having been much

* We speak of Scotland. We have not had much experience of the people or towns in England; but there is certainly a more general impression in that part of the island, that, to secure a general welcome among the families of the working classes, the offered services of Christianity must be accompanied with the gifts of ordinary kindness. We apprehend that there is a fatal incongruity between these two ministrations; and that every scheme for the christian education of the people, should stand dissevered from all ostensible measures for the relief of poverty.

adverted to, is what at present we shall most dwell upon—as furnishing the most important facility to the great enterprise, if not of carrying Christianity abroad among the distant wilds of Paganism, at least of obtaining entry for it among the families of our own population. It is a glorious achievement to plant the Gospel in other lands. But, if reckoned less glorious, it is surely not less useful to fill up the blanks and lighten the dark places of our home territory.

11. There is a barrier at the outset of the foreign which does not obtain in the home enterprise. In the former we go forth as bearers of a hostile religion. We come into conflict with the prejudices of an hereditary faith. We encounter the hazard of impassioned resistance, often of personal violence. In the latter we experience the reverse of all this. We go forth among the people, not to root out a hostile, but to revive a decayed religion—transmitted to them from their fathers; and which, though extinct in power, is not unknown to them by name, and is in harmony with all their remaining associations of sacredness, however feeble or almost forgotten these might be. It is thus, that, in the very first movements from house to house of the home missionary, there is often a certain reverential feeling awakened; and, at all events, as kindness is the moving principle of the operation, there is throughout a very general sense of that kindness, that is both warmly felt and gratefully acknowledged, and which secures, not a decent only, but a welcome reception to our adventurer on this new walk of benevolence. At

the very least, encouragement enough is given and a way is sufficiently opened, for announcing his errand to them as their christian friend or christian adviser, who will preach in their immediate neighbourhood on the Sabbath, and is willing to render through the week all those attentions and services of which they may choose to avail themselves. There is often a promise to attend on the public, and still oftener an invitation to repeat the personal visit—and so the profession of a willingness to accept of the private or the household ministrations. If this process be steadily persevered in, if to these stated movements oft repeated among the people, there be added a frequent occasional movement, whenever the call of sickness or of death or any sort of family distress shall have opened the hearts and the houses of the afflicted to the entry of christian kindness—the result of these assiduities through the week, is the gradual building up of a congregation on the Sabbath. The people even of the most outlandish district, in places the most destitute and depraved, may thus be gathered into a parochial family, and trained to parochial habits. Children of all others may be made to participate most largely in this improvement. Under the moral ascendancy of the pastor, who has assumed their territory for his vineyard and earned as the fruit of his daily and weekly labours the confidence and attachment of the people, education will grow apace among them. Even by the time when only perhaps a few are converted, many will be at least humanized—for, such is the savour of Christianity, that, over and above

its own proper influence on the individuals whom it sanctifies, it has a secondary and wide spread influence over the community, whose standard of morals it exalts, and whose general habits it refines and civilizes. Altogether, with the power of that kindness which the messengers of Christianity might bring to bear upon human feelings, and the power of Christianity itself over human consciences, there never was so effective an instrument as the one which we now describe, for reclaiming men from what might appear even the most hopeless and impracticable degeneracy. For the latter power, Christianity stands indebted to its own evidence, to the aspect of likelihood which it wears even at the first, and its perpetually growing claims on the attention and moral earnestness of every inquirer—till at length the conclusive revelation is made to him of such credentials, as satisfy his mind that the religion is true. For the former power it is indebted to that peculiarity in the human constitution, by which it is that the manifested good will of one man tells so immediately and with such subduing effect on the heart of another man. As a pioneer or a precursor to the ministrations of the Gospel, this principle is invaluable—though, till of late, but scarcely adverted to; and far too little use has been made of it. It of itself forms no part of the evidence for the truth of the christian religion; but it is the avenue by which the portable evidence of Christianity finds its way to the population—not that which carries the belief, but that which gains the atten-

tion that precedes the belief—not the proof, but the means for the conveyance of it.

12. Hitherto we have not enough availed ourselves of those strong affinities which bind one man to another, and extend the brotherhood of our nature, far beyond the limits of kindred or previous acquaintanceship. It may be experienced on the moment of our entrance within the threshold of a family which we never before saw. The character of the reception is almost invariable—that of genuine and entire cordiality. The errand on which we go, announces itself to be one of kindness; and, in almost every instance, it calls forth the sense and the spirit of kindness back again. By the very act of coming under the roof of one of the common people, we in a manner throw ourselves upon his kindness; and scarcely ever, in one instance, does this confidence deceive us. Insomuch that we have often felt, as if, to enter the house of a poor man or a labourer, was the readiest method of finding our way into his heart. Certain it is that nothing can be more companionable, and if not courtly at least courteous which is far better—nothing can be more polite in the best sense of the term, for it is nature's politeness under the spontaneous impulse of nature's honesty, than that which is habitually experienced in these rounds of pastoral or missionary visitation. If we want to taste the amenities of human intercourse, let us go, not in the capacity of an almoner but in the higher capacity of a christian philanthropist, either to the country hamlet or to the city lane—let us

carry our proffers of beneficence, either to the peasant in the one situation or to the man of handicraft and hard labour in the other—let it be the prospect of a christian benefit to themselves, or of an educational benefit to their children—we do not say that the consent will be gotten all at once to the practical arrangement, whatever it may be; but, from the very first, both the visit and the object of it will be well taken; and, such is the charm of these household attentions, that a great and effectual door is opened by them, to all those results, which the manifested friendship and the moral suasion of one man, have power to effectuate in the purposes and the doings of another.

13. We can well imagine here a certain suspicion or incredulity, as if our picture was overcoloured—or as if there was more of the imaginative than of the experimental in our representation. But our shrewd and sceptical antagonists do truly confound the things which differ, when they liken these every-day findings with which we now deal to the visions of Arcadia. Those cordialities of human intercourse, and the results which come out of them, have nought in them whatever of the romance or the extravagance of poetry. What Howard on the walk of general benevolence realized in prisons, any other, if he is but a man of heart and genuine piety, will realize in parishes. Those triumphs of kindness which the one achieved in the malefactor's cell, the other will with still greater facility achieve in the ploughman's cabin and the workman's lowliest tenement. If the

moral desperadoes of a jail can be made to own the omnipotence of charity, it surely will not be more difficult to earn the same ascendancy over the commonplace men and women of our general population. It is true, that, even among these, individuals are to be found, who, though not yet convicted of crime, have all the hardihood and all that aspect of stout and resolute defiance which belong to criminals—whose hearts are hearts of steel—whose houses are houses of riot, intemperance, and shame. Yet even they, it is often found, might be melted into a sort of grateful reverence, and that, on the first apostolic entry ever made within their doors; and, what might be deemed singular yet is really not so, though sheathed in hopeless obduracy themselves so that their own reformation is by all despaired of, yet there is enough of remaining conscience and human affection within them, to make them seize on the proposal of meetings and sermons and Sabbath schools for their children. But more, though at the outset house and heart should both be barricadoed against the approaches of christian benevolence, neither yet must all prospect of good, even in these cases of rare and monstrous exception to the general law of our nature, be given up as conclusively at an end. The determined agent of this benevolence is on the highest of all vantage-ground. He has only to keep his post and to watch his opportunity. Events will work for him. Providence will at length open a door for him. Calamity or sickness or death will in the course of months or years break in upon the house-

hold of this family of aliens—when our resolved visitant of mercy will be no longer scowled upon, and the sound of his footsteps will be welcome to their ears. His presence will solemnize them. His prayers will soften them. His sympathies and well-timed services will awaken the humanity, that has long been dormant but not extinguished within them. Even their gratitude, all ungainly as they are, will be found not beyond the power and the perseverance of charity like his; and, if theirs, he may be sure of a general if not a universal conquest over the affections of his whole territory. We do not say that he will convert all; but, nearly, he will humanize all. We do not say that, even at the end of a period of years, he will have gotten all or even many to believe. But he will have gotten very many to attend. He may not have lodged in the heart of each the truth which is unto salvation; but he will, at least, have congregated a goodly number within reach of the hearing of it. And, even at this early stage of his proceedings, though he may have only established the footsteps of a few in the way of life—he may have raised the standard of civility and morals throughout the general multitude. Though preparing the way for it, he may yet be far short of having consummated the object of the Christian. Yet already, in the service of having formed a humanized and orderly population, he may have fulfilled the great object of the statesman and the patriot.

14. So important is this process, that one cannot be at too great pains in explaining the essen-

tial steps of it. And the most essential, for recalling a population who have degenerated, is a system of week-day attentions within the limits of a district, small enough to ensure their sufficient frequency, and to make an acquaintance possible with one and all of the families. A church, not so related to a given territory, but meets the demand which already exists for the lessons of the Gospel—drawing within its precincts the attendance of those who have lost the habits and observations of a christian land, and amongst whom the sense of religion is in a great measure extinguished. It is not by any spontaneous movement of theirs, that the wished for condition will be accomplished. The movement must begin at the opposite quarter, with the dispensers of Christianity and not with its recipients—not on the part of men seeking after the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but on the part of men who go forth charged with its overtures and press them on the attention and acceptance of others. Had the world been left to itself, it would have settled or sunk still farther in the midst of its own degeneracy, and made no aspirations after God; and so a movement had to be made, not from earth to heaven, but from heaven to earth—when Christianity made its first ingress among men. Even after it was made known to a few in Judea, had the surrounding nations been left to themselves, they would still have persisted for ever, in the darkness and the depths of their idolatry; and so a movement was called for, not from the nations to Jerusalem—but, the other way, from Jerusalem to the nations; and the order

of procedure was, to go and preach the Gospel to every creature, beginning from Jerusalem. And still, after Christianity has thus been planted in any land, it must not lay aside its missionary character—but keep by it still, for its own further and fuller diffusion. For let the people of any locality be left to themselves; and they will lapse into irreligion, be it in the neglected outfields of a country or in the neglected streets of a city population; and still, whether to re-establish Christianity or to sustain it, the movement must be made not from them but to them. Nature has no appetency for that bread of life which came down from heaven; and which, after it has so come, must still be carried forth throughout the earth—and that, not from country to country only, but from house to house, so as to attempt a lodgment within every heart, and to knock at the door of every habitation. It is not only true in reference to the people of other regions and of distant climes—how can they believe except men be sent to them? It is true in reference to the people of other streets, and at the distance of but a few steps from us—how can they believe except men be sent to them? Each parish church of a religious establishment should be a missionary station, or the centre of a missionary process that bears on all the houses of its definite and assigned vicinity. And so of every new Church, every distinct and additional edifice that is raised for the services of the Gospel—it will lose its efficiency as a further propagator of that Gospel in the land, unless it assumes a missionary character and enters on a

missionary operation. Instead of waiting to be filled by a movement from without, it should itself originate the movement, and best, if possible, when among the families in a state of immediate juxtaposition around it—holding out all facilities for their attendance, and exciting to the uttermost their demand or their desire for Christianity, by presenting it to their notice, and bringing if possible its urgencies and its awakening calls within reach of their consciences. It is thus that each may reclaim its own district; may take possession and cultivate its own little territory; and, by the ligament which binds together the week-day attentions of the minister on the one hand and the Sabbath attendance of the people on the other, may gather into adjacent parochial communities those immense city multitudes, whose amelioration in the bulk looks so chimerically hopeless, but in detail and by fragments or sections, is really so practicable. We know of no other instrumentality by which this greatest of all problems can be resolved. It is only by a separate operation on each district, and then the apposition of one district to another—it is only thus we apprehend, that, as by the apposition of farm to farm, a moral fertility can be made to overspread a whole territory, or a whole country be reclaimed.

15. How then is it that philanthropists and patriots, those who have the amelioration of humanity constantly in their mouths, nay perhaps are honestly intent on it, how is it that they so little avail themselves of this patent and practicable way? There is not a fonder speculation of theirs,

than the likeliest method by which to regenerate society—to regenerate the world. We can imagine no other method of doing it than to do it piecemeal; or to do it in parcels. But like all those who say much and do nothing, they seem to be dreaming of some expedient or other by which to do it in bulk—so that, all at once, and on the back of their yet undisclosed and we may add, yet undiscovered specific, the human species might instantly start into a moralized and happy family. They are waiting till some new ingenuity be devised in education, or, perhaps, some new adjustment in politics—on which, as if by the lifting up of a magical wand, the earth is to emerge into a state of life and of enlargement, and the millenium of their fancy and their hopes is to be suddenly realized. The real millenium that is awaiting our world, if to be introduced by miracle or by a preternatural visitation from without which it very likely will, may come suddenly. But in as far as dependent on human effort, or even on grace attendant as it commonly is on the footsteps of a human process, it must come gradually. It must be with the moral or the spiritual as with the natural agriculture. To speed forward the one we must laboriously do the work of each furrow and of each field; and thus pass onward from farm to farm, till the whole earth is brought into its utmost possible cultivation. And so, for the purpose either of civilizing or of christianizing the world, we must pass onwards from one family and from one district to another. Every whole is made up of parts—nor can we see how the whole is to

be overtaken, but by each labourer or each distinct body of labourers acquitting themselves of their part, till at length the deed universal is made out, by a separate fulfilment and then a summation of the deeds particular. The way to reform a neighbourhood is just the way to reform a nation, or a quarter of the globe, or the great globe itself and all who inherit therein. This great achievement may be talked of in the lump; but it must be executed in detail. The thing must be gone about inductively. Our men of sublime and speculative genius, who have no patience for the drudgery of execution, may engross the ear of the public for a time with their generalized and magnificent way of it; but we must come to this way at the last—after that the schemes and the systems of our modern theorists have had their course; and the world has at last become tired of the conceits, and the crudities, and the thousand vacillating projects, and the as many abortions of our modern legislators.

16. But, recalling ourselves from this more extended survey to the means and the likelihoods of success in one little territory not half a mile from home—depending first on the power wherewith the kindness of those who are the messengers or the bearers of christian truth operate upon human feelings, and secondly on the power wherewith the self-evidence of the truth itself operates upon human consciences. On these we need expatiate no further; but we might at least remark how precious, we had almost said how proud an achievement it is, when, by dint of these, the people of

one district, nay but one family or one individual, is transformed. Apart from the consideration of immortality, we know not a spectacle of greater worth, and we may add of greater tastefulness and beauty, even beauty of the highest order as belonging to the moral picturesque, than a christian peasant—whose virtues are seen in all the greater lustre that they are arrayed in homely garb, or have taken root in a tenement of poverty—like the enhanced loveliness of a picture, made to stand out all the more strikingly, by the darkness of the ground on which it is projected. Perhaps it is this contrast between light and shadow which causes it to be so fine an exhibition, when deep and thorough religious principle takes up its abode in the heart of an ordinary workman. But, however this may be certain it is, that, as there is no one event that serves more to strengthen the foundation, so there is none which serves more to grace the aspect of human society—whether we look to his well-ordered household through the week, or to his well-filled family pew upon the Sabbath. If there be one sound more like the music of paradise than another, it is when the simple voice of psalms arises in morning or evening orisons from the lowly cottage; or one spectacle more rich in promise, even the promise of fruit for immortality, it is when a cottage family is seen in full muster at the house of God. There is altogether such a refreshing moral healthfulness in the Christianity of humble life, that we feel for it, for the Christianity of artificers and tradesmen, a profounder homage than for the Christianity either of

accomplished men of affluence, or of profound and learned theologians. The greatest of all national blessings, certainly the greatest national reform, were to bring within reach of all, the means of this best and highest education. Herein lie the true dignity of man, the proudest rights and investitures of humanity. This is the genuine majesty of the people—unknown to mock patriotism, that seeks for the hosannahs of the multitude in another way and by other promises, which, never realized, only serve to flatter and deceive them.

17. They who incredulously regard the people as beyond the reach of this achievement, must be ignorant of that evidence in our religion which is addressed to the consciences of men—which evidence indeed is the great, if not the only instrument of christianization, both in and out of Christendom. To this evidence in fact we owe the great bulk of our home Christianity. We on this subject make our confident appeal to the ministers of the Gospel, and bid them tell what that is which originates and which fashions the Christianity of their own people. Was it a series of lectures on the Deistical controversy? Was it the argument of Paley or of Leslie or of Butler that germinated their faith? Whether was it the doctrine in the book or the history of the book that was the instrument of their conversion? That the people might see the truth of the Gospel had they to plant an historic ladder, ascending from the present age to that of the Apostles—or, by the lights of criticism and erudition, had they to guide them by a series of indices along the historic pathway, till they could

lay their hands on the authenticity of the books of the New Testament; or the certainty of the narrative contained in it? If they have faith at all they have a reason for their faith. They do see the truth of the Gospel—and the question is whether they see it immediately, in the light of scripture doctrine; or mediately, in the light of historical demonstration. When we enter the house of one of our cottage patriarchs, and examine the library which lies in little room upon his shelves—we may there find what that is which has begun, and what that is which aliments his Christianity. They are not books on the external history of the Bible. They are the Bible itself, and books on the internal substance and contents of the Bible. They are the Flavels and the Guthries and the Richard Baxters of the puritanic age who are his favourites—men who say little or nothing on the argumentative evidence of scripture; but who unfold the subject matter, and who urge and urge most impressively on the consciences of their readers the lessons of scripture. In a word, it is by a perpetual interchange between the conscience and the Bible that their Christianity is upholden,—by a light struck out between the sayings of the one and the findings of the other. It is not a light which is out of the book, but a light which is in the book, that commences and sustains the Christianity of our land—the Christianity of our ploughmen, our artizans, our men of handicraft and of hard labour. Yet not the Christianity theirs of deceitful imagination, or of implicit adherence to authority; but the Christianity of deep,

we will add, of rational belief, firmly and profoundly seated in the principles of our moral nature, and nobly accredited by the virtues of our well-conditioned peasantry. In the olden time of presbytery—that time of scriptural Christianity in our pulpits and of psalmody in all our cottages, these men grew and multiplied in the land—and, though derided in the heartless literature, and discountenanced or disowned in the heartless politics of other days, it is their remnant which acts as a preserving salt among our people, and which constitutes the real strength and glory of the Scottish nation.

18. Yet, however sufficient for the practical object of conversion that evidence may be as addressed to the consciences of the people, let none on that account detract from the importance of the external, or rather what may be termed the literary and argumentative evidence for the truth of Christianity. Without this last, Christianity would soon forfeit the respect and confidence of the enlightened and upper classes of society; and their influence, the infection of their example, would speedily descend among the people, among whom at length the ordinances of the Gospel, and more especially the hearing of it, would fall into general neglect and desuetude. Even were it possible that our religion could have had its present experimental and popular, without its historical and scientific evidence; yet, wanting the latter, the former would cease to be operative, simply by its ceasing to be attended to. Whatever evidence may lie enveloped, like some pearl of great price

in an unopened casket, in the subject matter of Christianity—it must be altogether fruitless, without an earnest and persevering regard on the part of conscience-stricken inquirers, and, who in general too, are only so stricken in the act of reading their Bibles or of listening to the friends and the ministers of religion. But if in any country, Christianity should become the object of general contempt to the higher and more intellectual orders of the community, both ministers and Bibles would in process of time become the objects of general abandonment by the multitude at large. It is therefore well that Christianity possesses that which, on justice being done to its credentials and its claims, must command for it the homage of the most exalted whether in rank or in scholarship; and accordingly in Britain, where perhaps the aristocracy both of wealth and of talent is more virtuous than in most other nations, the erudite or academic demonstration of the truth of Christianity has been most studied; and it is well, we repeat, that Christianity is so firmly based on this species of argument, as to have kept its ground among the reasoners. It is not the power or the triumph of this argument which works among the multitude a general faith in the christian religion; but it has helped, it has greatly though it may be indirectly helped, to maintain their general respect for it; and whatever the influence may be, whether it is hereditary attachment or the mechanical operation of habit or the testimony of their superiors in favour of the established religion, which keeps up their adherence to Bibles and to the

pulpits of the land—it is in virtue of that adherence, that their minds are kept in a state of contiguity with the subject matter of the Gospel, and that the self-evidence which lies in the Gospel itself is brought to bear upon them, so as to work in many that faith which is unto salvation. Distinction should be made between the initial and the final in this operation. It is not the learned argument that converts the unlearned, but the respect of the learned in society leaves undisturbed the respect and attention of the unlearned to the lessons of the Gospel; and it is by the power of these lessons upon their consciences that the unlearned among the people are converted. But what is more, it is not the learned argument that converts even the learned of the community. It may conciliate them so far as to command their acquiescence or their intellectual homage for the truth of revelation. It may satisfy their understandings as to the critical and historical credentials of the book; but to experience the truth in its power or in its saving efficacy, they must become experimentally acquainted with the contents of the book. Their satisfaction with the credentials will, on the one hand, but aggravate their indifference to the contents of the Bible; and, on the other hand, it is only when they pass from the study of the one to the earnest and prayerful and conscientious study of the other—it is only after they have opened their Bibles and are devoutly and diligently employed in exploring its pages, that they are in likely circumstances for obtaining that faith, which enters alike into the mind of the philo-

sopher and peasant, and prepares them alike for heaven. Both are admitted to the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven in the same way and upon the same footing at the last. The light which shines out of darkness, shines in the very same way on the mind of the most accomplished *savant*, and on the humblest of the common people. It is the light of its moral or experimental or doctrinal evidence manifested to the conscience which christianizes them both; and even the proudest of reasoners must thus humble themselves and become as little children, ere the truth of the Gospel becomes theirs —even that truth which is hid from the wise and the prudent, and is revealed only to babes.

19. The external evidence for the truth of Christianity is such as to leave infidelity without excuse, even though the remaining important branches of the Christian defence had been less strong and satisfactory than they are. "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." "And if I had not done the works among them which none other man did, they had not sinned." But the study of the historical evidence is not the only channel to a faith in the truth of Christianity. How can it in the face of the obvious fact, that there are thousands and thousands of Christians, who bear the most undeniable marks of the truth having come home to their understanding "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power?" They have an evidence within themselves, which the world knoweth not, even the promised manifestations of the Saviour. This evidence is "a sign to them that believe;" but the

Bible speaks also of another evidence, which is "a sign to them that believe not;" and should it be effectual in reclaiming any of these from their infidelity, a mighty object is gained by the exhibition of it. Should it not be effectual, it will be to them "a savour of death unto death;" and this is one of the very effects ascribed to the proclamation of Christian truth in the first ages. If, even in the face of that kind of evidence which they have a relish and respect for, they still hold out against the reception of the Gospel, this must aggravate the weight of the threatening which lies upon them: "How shall they escape if they neglect so great a salvation?" It were well, then, if the effect of having studied the historical evidence should be a stronger determination than before to take our Christianity exclusively from the Bible. It is not enough to entitle a man to the name of a Christian, that he professes to believe the Bible to be a genuine communication from God. To be the disciple of any book, he must do something more than satisfy himself that its contents are true —he must read the book—he must obtain a knowledge of the contents. And how many are there in the world, who do not call the truth of the Bible message in question, while they suffer it to lie beside them unopened, unread, and unattended to!

20. But if, on the one hand, the evidence which tells upon the people, should not lead us to undervalue that evidence on which Christianity makes its appeal to the science and the scholarship of the most enlightened in society—on the other hand, no evidence, whether external or internal, or with

whatever truth and ability it may be expounded, should lead us to forget our entire dependence on the Spirit of God. All the powers and all the activities of nature will be of no avail, without the visitation of this preternatural influence from Heaven. There is nothing to supersede the utmost diligence in the use of means—when told what that is which gives to means all their efficacy. It should not slacken the workman's hand, it should rather put him on all his strenuousness—when told that the high capacity in which he labours, is that of a fellow worker with God: But still, if God be not recognized in the process, all human labour will be vain and all human wisdom a mockery. In other words, if we want to insure success, prayer must be added to performance. The building of churches—the gathering of congregations—even the preaching of the word, with whatever eloquence or talent—all will turn out the unmeaning noise and bustle of an empty preparation, without the effectual invocation of a blessing from on high. The Apostles, in the first ages of Christianity, seem to have been abundantly sensible of this—when they said, "We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."* It was not enough to have preached the word, even with the purity of an Apostle. It must be preached, not with purity alone but with power—even that power, given only to prayer, which opens the gate of heaven, and "moves him who moves the universe." There is not a more delightful occupation than

* Act. vi. 4.

the prosperous management of human nature—when schemes of education and Christian philanthropy have so far a successful issue; and the boyhood of a before neglected locality are now assembled in schools; and the people at large, obedient to the sound of the church-bell, are now to be seen Sabbath after Sabbath in the house of God. But even this spectacle, inexpressibly pleasing as it is to the eye of taste, and full of promise and expectancy to every lover of his species, will terminate in a mere civil or economical reformation, and without any fruit for immortality—unless the windows of the upper sanctuary be opened, and living water* shall be made to descend upon us. We might build our churches—we might chalk out our parishes—we might open our seminaries of learning; and raise, in the midst of some favourite and selected territory, a full complement of busy and well-ordered institutions, by which to send forth a moralizing influence upon the families. But, in the first place, to work aright this moral apparatus that our hands have reared, we are altogether dependent on the Spirit of God for the men; and, accordingly we are told, not merely to send labourers ourselves, but to pray that God would send them, who might enter on the plenteous harvest of our large and teeming population. And then for the efficacy, for the real saving and spiritual efficacy of their labours, we must continue to knock at that door which we cannot open—that light and grace may descend on

* John vii. 38, 39

this busy scene of human endeavours, and God may revive His own work in the midst of us. Could any thing exceed the labour and the locomotion of Paul?—the fervour and constancy of his ministrations?—the weight and variety of his multitudinous cares? And yet what a life of supplication was his, as well as of sustained diligence and activity; and how he cast himself on the intercessions of his own converts—imploring the benefit of their prayers. And it holds true, not in the first age only, but in all ages of the church. It is only by the union of devout hearts with diligent hands, that Christianity will either be planted firmly or propagated widely in the midst of us. Prayer and performance must go together. We should be as diligent as if men did all. We should be as dependent as if God did all. Our pains-taking of itself will do nothing without prayer. And it is just as true that our prayers of themselves will do nothing without pains. It is the recorded experience of one of the most zealous and successful of Christian missionaries, that it is in the power of pains and of prayers to do any thing.

21. II. This reasoning on the means and the likelihoods of christianization at home, is applicable, in many leading respects, to the question of christianization abroad. The true philosophy of missions is comprehensive of both—resting on this basis, the identity of human nature in all the climes and countries of the world. He who made of the same blood all the nations that be on the face of the earth, hath also made them of the

same spirit, planted within the breast of each and of every man the same mental economy; and, since the original formation of our first great parent, all have undergone the same degeneracy and are universally smitten with the same moral disease—so that the Gospel, whether in the house of our next door neighbour or among the farthest wilds and on the most distant confines of humanity, meets with the same adaptations, the same sense of guilt, the same apprehensions of a coming judgment, the same felt need of a Saviour, in a word the same fears and feelings and principles, which, similarly called forth by the Spirit of God, will give the very same response and the very same reception to the truths of Christianity all the world over. We must not wonder at the uniformity in the result—seeing that the same doctrine meets with the same consciences every where. There is no difference in the objective truth, when we preach the same doctrine to every creature under heaven; and no such difference in the subjective minds on which we operate, as to make the reception of Christianity an event that might take place in one country and be impossible in another. In a word, there are the same minds and the same consciences in both; and there is the same instrumentality brought to bear on both—even the one and unchangeable doctrine of the New Testament. And there is the same agent for giving effect to that instrumentality—even the Spirit of God in whose demonstration and by whose power it is, that the truth is made palpable and efficient. So that by preaching alike in all countries the same

truth, even the truth as it is in Jesus; and by praying alike for the same blessing, even for an illumination from on high—this truth is made manifest to consciences every where: or, in other words, the Gospel of Christ may be carried with acceptance to all tribes and nations and languages.

22. It is thus that the philosophy of missions might be vindicated. It is an axiom in philosophy that we should look for a like effect from like causes—a like manufacture from like materials. In the work of conversion the materials on which we operate is the same, whether at home or in India—the identical human nature, that is characteristic not of tribe or of nation, but is characteristic of the species. The instrument by which we operate is the same—the identical doctrine of the Bible, the identical message from heaven to all the people that be upon the earth. The power which gives the instrument its efficacy is the same—even that Spirit who bloweth where he listeth, and who with but the Bible to pioneer his way, disowns all the distinctions of savage or civilized life and all the barriers of geography. In the prosecution of this cause, we transfer to other lands the very machinery which is at work in our own parishes. We translate the sacred volume and circulate it amongst them. We send school-masters who might teach them to read this vernacular Bible. We send ministers who expound it. We knock at the door of heaven's sanctuary, that a virtue may descend from on high, and God may add the grace of His Spirit to the testimony of His word. We cannot overthrow the sufficiency of this process, but by

an argument that would nullify all the christianizing processes of our own land. We cannot put down this cause without passing sentence of extinction on the religious light of all Christendom. We cannot rightfully charge the work of missionaries beyond this limit with fanaticism or folly, without fastening the brand of these very imputations on the work of ministers within. If no Christianity can be formed there without the power of working present miracles, or the power of evincing to the belief of savages the reality of past miracles—then no Christianity can be formed here throughout the mass and great majority of our own population. But if Christianity can be formed here by the simple power of truth upon the conscience, this is the principle which opens the world to the enterprize of missionaries. Wherever there is a human being there is a conscience; and on this ground alone, the message of salvation might circulate around the globe, and be carried with acceptance through all its nations and tribes and families.

23. When the first missionaries went to Greenland, we may be sure that they had the ignorance of a most raw and unfurnished population to contend with. They thought they would go systematically to work—and before presenting them with the christian message in the terms of the message, that they would give them some preparatory ideas on natural religion. For this purpose they expatiated in formal demonstration on the existence and unity and the attributes and the law of God. The Greenlanders did not comprehend them; and the

missionaries were mortified to find, that, after years of labour, they had not gained a single proselyte to the truth. On this they resolved to change their measures—and, as a last desperate experiment, they gave up all their preparatory instructions, and made one great and decisive step onward to the peculiar doctrines, and these too couched in the peculiar phraseology of the Gospel. When simply told in scripture words of sin and of the Saviour, the effect was instantaneous. There was something in the hearts of these unlettered men, which responded to the views and tidings of the New Testament. The demonstrations of natural religion fell fruitless and unintelligible upon their ear; but they felt the burden of sin and of death; and pleasant to their souls was the preacher's voice, when it told that unto them a Saviour was born. They live on the very outskirts of population—and beyond them there is nothing seen but a wilderness of snow, and nothing heard but the angry howling of the elements. Who will say that the enterprize is chimerical now, that a christian people have been formed in a country so unpromising, that the limits of the visible church have been pushed forward to the limits of human existence, and the tidings of good will to men have been carried with acceptance to the very last and outermost of the species?

24. The discovery that was made by the Moravians was converted by them into a principle which they carried round the globe; and which ever since has been the fertile source of their marvellous success in the work of evangelizing the

heathen. They now learned that it was impossible to antedate the message of the Gospel in any land, and they availed themselves of this Greenland experience in all their subsequent operations—among the Esquimaux of Labrador, among the Indians of North America, among the negroes of the Danish and the Dutch and the British colonies, and lastly among the Hottentots of South Africa. As the effect of their peculiar yet powerful moral regimen, villages have arisen in the wilderness; and we now behold men of before untamed and savage nature, as if by the touch of miracle, completely because radically transformed—living in gentleness together, and tutored in the arts and the decencies of a civilized people. Many there are, who nauseate the peculiar evangelism which lies at the root of this great moral and spiritual change, yet are forced to admire the beauteous efflorescence which proceeds from it—just as there are many who can eye with delight the graces of a cultivated landscape, yet have no taste for the operations of the husbandry which called it into being. Certain it is that Moravians have become the objects of a popular and sentimental admiration among men, who could not tolerate the methodistical flavour as they may term it, of a Moravian Report—a thing just as possible, as that they might feel a most exquisite relish for their music along with a thorough distaste for their hymns. The fruit and the flower are both pleasing to the eye of Nature, with many to whom the culture is offensive, and who could not look upon it without the revolt of Nature's enmity to the truth as it is

in Jesus. And therefore it is, that they look only to the one, and contrive to overlook the other. And accordingly Moravians have, of late, become the objects of very general request, as well as general admiration. Their services are every where sought after. It was a most substantial testimony in their favour, when the West India planters found the best results from their preaching and discipline, in the good order and fidelity of their slaves—proving of the most degraded and oppressed of our species—that still there was a moral nature within, which felt the adaptations of the Gospel and could respond to them.

25. This seems the best plan for the adjustment of the question, whether the first attempt should be to christianize or to civilize—or which of these ought to have the precedency of the other. The Moravians themselves have innocently given rise to a delusion on this subject. The result in their converts has now become so striking and so palpable—they have at length succeeded in raising so beauteous a spectacle, as that of christian and well-ordered villages, in what were before the frightful haunts of prowling and plundering barbarians—there is something so inexpressibly pleasing in the chapel services, and the well attended schools, and the picturesque gardens, and the snug habitations and prosperous husbandry of reclaimed Hottentots, that Moravians are now extolled by sentimental travellers and eloquent writers as an example, nay as a reproach to all other missionaries. And they have supposed, perhaps naturally enough, that what was foremost in exhibition was

also first in time—that the Christianity, in short, was a graft upon the civilization, and not the civilization a graft upon the Christianity. There were none more hurt and scandalized by these eulogies than the Moravians themselves—and they have actually penned a vindication of their method, not against the censure of malignant enemies, but against the praise of mistaken admirers. The whole history, in fact, of their success, we may add, the whole history of christianization since the days of the apostles, goes to prove, that wherever the faith of the Gospel arises in the mind, it is rooted and has its deep foundation in the workings of that moral nature which is common to all the species—and that it springs not from so thin a layer as that surface-dressing of civilization, by which one part of the species is distinguished from another. And so it is, that they begin with the topics of sin and of the Saviour at the very outset of their converse, even with the rudest of nature's wanderers—and they find a conscience in them which responds as readily to their sayings, and with less of presumption and prejudice to obstruct their efficacy, as in the lettered Mahometan or demi-civilized Hindoo. It is true, they also attempt, as all other missionaries do, to initiate into the arts and industry of Europe from the very beginning of their enterprise—and the two educations of religion and humanity go on contemporaneously together. It may, in some instances, be difficult to assign what the precedency is in the order of time—but as to the precedency in the order of nature, or in the order of cause and effect,

there is no difficulty. It is not the previous civilization which makes way for the Christianity—it is the previous incipient Christianity which makes way for the civilization. This is the strict philosophy of the process. Christianity does not wait for civilization—it is civilization that waits and follows with attendant footsteps on Christianity. In a word, the message of God to man may be delivered immediately to all men. It is a message alike to the barbarian and the Greek—and here, too, as in every thing else, there is the fullest harmony between the declarations of the Gospel itself, and the findings of experience.

26. This explains that very prevalent misconception, in virtue of which it is, that while in the West Indies more especially, and indeed throughout a great portion of British society, there was such demand and admiration for Moravians, there was along with it some years ago so strong a remainder of dislike and even of derision for all other missionaries. The reason was simply this. The Moravians were the oldest of all our modern Protestant missionaries—and they had time to work up a more conspicuous result as the evidence of their labours. They also, went through the very ordeal of contempt and of bitter calumny which other missionaries had still to undergo—and must continue to endure, so long as the Christianity of the attempt stands out more nakedly to the eye of worldly observers; and the mantle of civilization is not yet sufficiently thickened to cover it from their view. There may be even still a rawness in the more recent village of Bethelsdorp,

which is now most comfortably and completely seasoned away, in the older establishments of the Moravians. The one is just as solidly and deeply founded as the other, in the sacredness of the enterprise which led to it. But there may not yet be that secondary luxuriance, which catches the eye and calls forth the homage of sentimentalism. The honey-suckle has perhaps not fully grown at each cottage door—nor may the picture yet be completed for the enraptured traveller to gaze upon, and at which he kindles perchance into strains of sweetest poesy. So meagre, so utterly superficial and ignorant and meagre, are the conceptions of those, who while they would exalt the Moravians, do it at the expense of the Methodist and of all other missionaries. There is in it the mere finery of sentimental prettiness, without the depth of christian principle, without the substance or the depth of philosophic observation.

BOOK IV.

ON THE BOOKS OF THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN REVELATION, AND THE DEGREE OF AUTHORITY WHICH BELONGS TO THEM.

CHAPTER I.

On the Canon of Scripture; and, more especially, of the Old Testament.

1. The term "canon" has long been employed, to distinguish the real or authoritative books of revelation from all other books, whether they pretended to this high character or not. The origin and significancy of the word in this particular application of it, seem not very clear. In the primitive use of it, it denoted the tongue of a balance—whence, by no very distant transition, it came to mean a rule or standard. Every book that is the genuine work of an inspired man, is an absolute rule of faith or life for all who are addressed by it. St. Paul, in Gal. vi. 16, speaks of those who "walk according to this rule," κανονι τουτῳ; and in Phil. iii. 16, he says "let us walk by the same rule," τῳ αυτῳ κανονι. To walk according to the canon of certain doctrines or precepts, is to walk according to the rule and direction of the scriptures which contain them—which may be well therefore termed canonical, because of their prerogative to rule, or because of the authority which belongs to

them. Certain it is, that the term, in this sense and application of it, was very early, and at length very generally made use of in the christian church. It appears in phrases of constant recurrence throughout the works of Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Athanasius, Epiphanius, Jerome, Augustine, Eusebius and others.

2. We may be well assured that all those books which were admitted into the canon, obtained this high distinction, because of the peculiar respect and confidence in which they were held at the time, and which signalized them over all other books. But the testimony of these other and inferior books is regarded by many as the main, the fundamental evidence, for the canonical rank of our present scriptures. In the treatment of this question, we are liable to the same delusion as that which we have already attempted to expose. We are apt to look on the Bible, the whole Bible, as one book; and, instead of admitting its evidence in favour of itself, to search for the testimonies of writers external to the Bible—as if these constituted the only external evidence for the canon which can anywhere be found. It is forgotten that the Bible consists of no less than sixty-six separate compositions, all of them possessing the highest authority in ancient esteem—else they would never have been preferred to the place which they now occupy. The very circumstance which has caused their testimony to be overlooked, is that which gives the greatest possible weight and value to it. When a scriptural writer is deponed to by an exscriptural—this is a testimony of some account in favour of the former.

But of far higher account surely, as generally the more ancient, and certainly the most trusted at the time by the best and most competent judges, must be the testimonies of the scriptural writers in favour of each other. These last testimonies have certainly been much overlooked, as if hidden from observation by being placed within the four corners of the Bible. If so, they are a hidden treasure —nor have we been made aware of the whole richness and power of the argument in behalf of scripture, till we have collected all the rays of evidence which pass and repass from one independent part of this great collection to another. There is a descending stream of light in the testimonies of subsequent writers; and these have drawn the principal attention of inquirers. But there is, in our estimation, a surpassing radiance of primitive and central light, in the testimonies of the original writers; and so, at least, as to furnish the strongest internal evidence for the canon of the Old Testament. The later scriptures must of course participate less in this advantage—as they depend more on the citations and references of succeeding authors. But it is truly fortunate, that, for the greater distance at which the more ancient record stands from the present age, and so the less satisfactory evidence by which it is either followed or encompassed, we should enjoy so full a compensation in that evidence which it harbours within the receptacle of its own bosom. We propose, therefore, that our chief attention should be given to this peculiar evidence for the canon of the Old Testament—as illustrative of a principle for which we have the

highest value; and which we have stated and enforced in another place.* It will afterwards appear, how much the establishment of the canonicity, if it may be so termed, of the Old Testament, prepares the way for the inspiration both of the Old and of the New.

3. We are not to imagine, however, that the exscriptural evidence for the canon of the Old Testament is either weak or scanty. We have much of this evidence in the Apocrypha, from which also we gather, as we do abundantly from other history besides, the zeal and tenacity of the Jewish nation on the subject of their own sacred writings. In the first book of Maccabees, written, it is generally thought about a century before the birth of Christ, and, as the best judges hold, by a more authentic historian than even Josephus, we have a vivid description of the sufferings of the Jews, under the persecution which they sustained from Antiochus Epiphanes. Among other cruelties we are told that "when they (the persecutors) had rent in pieces the books of the law which they found, they burnt them with fire. And wheresoever was found with any the book of the testament, or if any consented to the law, the king's commandment was, that they should put him to death."† This is confirmed by Josephus, whose history indeed of this period is very much taken from the book that we are now quoting. "If there were any sacred book, or the law found, it was destroyed, and those with whom they were found miserably perish-

* See Book II. Chap. iv. § 16, 17. † 1 Mac. c. i. 56, 57.

ed also."* This zeal of the Jews for the books of their religion forms a guarantee for their safe custody, and gives a confidence in their received catalogue of genuine and authentic scriptures which we should not have felt, had the people been indifferent to the possession or the preservation of them. With such a national character as theirs, there lies immense evidence for the canonicity of the Old Testament, in the one circumstance alone, that its books were generally received and acknowledged by the Jews as their scriptures, or the books of their religion, to the exclusion of all others. The state of their Bible in the days of our Saviour carries an evidence in itself, for its being indeed the true and the right state of it; nor can we imagine how that evidence could be made stronger, than by the disruption which took place between the Jews and the Christians—and yet the common recognition which both continued to make of the same Old Testament. Even could no express written testimonies have been adduced, in favour of the books which compose the Hebrew scriptures, there is a firm monumental evidence for them, in the general use and esteem of their own people—and more especially as authenticated by the actual agreement between these two hostile bodies of witnesses, the Christians and Jews, who, though in the fiercest controversy against each other on the most vital questions, nevertheless unite in the homage which they render to our present Old Testament. This is an evidence patent to all eyes, and perhaps

* Joseph. Antiq. Book XII. c. v. § 4.

undervalued on that account—though, in our estimation, of ten-fold greater weight than all the array of those testimonies which can be produced by the learned from Jewish authors, and also from the earlier of the Christian fathers. It is well, however, that such an array can be exhibited. It is well that we are told by Josephus—"We have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from, and contradicting one another [as the Greeks have], but only twenty-two * books

* We now number thirty-nine books in the Old Testament; but these are all comprised in the twenty-four or twenty-two books, their estimated number in earlier times. Ezra and his Jewish colleagues are understood to have made out an enumeration of twenty-four books, comprehending however, all the present books of our received Old Testament, and including none other. Their enumeration stood thus. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel (our two present books in one), Kings (a similar reduction), Chronicles (again two in one), Ezra (which included Nehemiah), Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, and lastly the twelve prophets (being the minor prophets, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi) in one book—making in all twenty-four books of our present thirty-nine. The later Jews reduced this number to twenty-two, so as to correspond with the Hebrew alphabet—not, however by abstracting from the canon any of its parts, but by combining in two instances, two books into one, appending Ruth to the book of Judges, and the Lamentations to Jeremiah. This method of classifying the books of the Old Testament variously, has somewhat obscured the distinctness of the testimonies in their favour. In the general divisions too there was a want of uniformity. Josephus, it will be seen, enumerates five Mosaical or Legal books, thirteen Prophetical, and four Poetical or Preceptive. Whereas with many of the Hebrew doctors, perhaps the most general reckoning amongst them was that of five legal, eight prophetical books, and eleven books termed by them holy writings, or Hagiographa. Still later the whole number of books was estimated at twenty-seven—not by the addition or abstraction of any of the parts from the whole, but by a variation in the reckoning of the parts. See Buxstorf's Tiberias for further information on this subject.

which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine. And of them five belong to Moses which contain his laws, and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time: and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by that we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one hath been so bold as either to add any thing to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them; but it is become natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, willingly to die for them. For it is no new thing for our captives, many of them in number, and frequently in time, to be seen to endure racks and deaths of all kinds upon the theatres, that they may not be obliged to say one word against our laws and the records which contain them; whereas there are none at all among the Greeks who would undergo the least harm on that account, no nor in case all the writings that

are among them were to be destroyed; for they take them to be such discourses as are framed agreeably to the inclinations of those that write them; and they have justly the same opinion of the ancient writers, since they see some of the present generation bold enough to write about such affairs, wherein they were not present, nor had concern enough to inform themselves about them from those that knew them; examples of which may be had in this late war of ours, where some persons have written histories, and published them, without having been in the places concerned, or having been near them when the actions were done; but these men put a few things together by hearsay, and insolently abuse the world, and call these writings by the name of *Histories*."*—It is further well that on this subject, we have such a galaxy of evidence, in the authors whom Josephus refers to in the foregoing passage—who wrote the Jewish history since the days of Artaxerxes; and who, though not esteemed of like authority with the canonical writers, might nevertheless (at least some of them) be confided in as faithful historians. Josephus intimates, as the reason why they were not so esteemed, that the nation was not so privileged as formerly with the visits of prophetical

* Joseph. against Apion, Book I. § 8. Had Josephus not chanced to bequeath this passage to posterity, ought the evidence for the Hebrew scriptures to have been sensibly weaker in consequence? Should not the faith of the whole nation of the Jews, accredited by the like faith of the whole body of Christians as to the books deemed sacred, and more especially when accompanied by such a mass and amount of evidence as can be educed from the scriptures themselves—should not this have compensated for the want of the exscriptural testimony of Josephus?

men. In other words, these authors did not rank with the sacred writers, and yet might rank very high as authentic narrators of the state and affairs of the Jewish people. The truth is, that most of them have incurred an undue discredit in consequence of the extravagant pretensions which have been made in their behalf, to an equal place with the writers of the Old Testament. But for this, they would have been more generally appealed to; for the Apocrypha too contain a great amount of exscriptural evidence in favour of the Jewish scriptures—such evidence as is exhibited in favour of the Christian scriptures, by Lardner, in his Credibility; where he makes a collection of citations and references to the New Testament from the works of the Christian fathers, who stood in the same relation to the New that the Apocryphal writers did to the Old Testament. It were well, if from these Apocrypha, along with the works of the earliest Jewish authors not canonical,* there could be presented to the world such a digest or enumeration of testimonies in favour of the Hebrew scriptures, as Lardner has made for the Christian scriptures from the writings of the fathers as well as of the Jews and Heathens. The common reader will find it a confirmatory and profitable exercise, to read those Apocrypha which are well provided with marginal references—whence he will be able to collect a body of evidence both for the books of the Old Testament and for the his-

* More particularly Josephus and Philo. The latter has expressly quoted or referred to almost all the books of our present Old Testament, as authoritative scriptures—and to none others.

tory contained in them.* Ere we conclude this brief notice of the exscriptural evidence for the Old Testament, we would advise those readers who might wish to attain a complete view of this department, to make themselves acquainted with the express written testimonies of the Christian fathers—who, in innumerable instances, depone to the canonical authority of separate books; and sometimes present us with catalogues of the whole. Of these, one of the most full and distinct is the catalogue by Melito, bishop of Sardis, who

* Were a Lardnerian collection made from the Apocrypha in favour of the Old Testament, the following articles would find a place in it among many others of the same character:—

2 Esdras, c. i. 39, 40, "Unto whom I will give for leaders, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Oseas, Amos, and Micheas, Joel, Abdias, and Jonas, Nahum, and Abacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zachary, and Malachy, which is called also an angel of the Lord." The twelve last named, associated with the three ancestral patriarchs of the Jewish people include all the minor prophets, whose books were bound up in one volume. It is difficult to imagine that the author of Esdras should have derived these names from any other quarter than from this volume, or that his collection should have quadrated so accurately with the biblical one, but on the hypothesis of its anterior and separate existence —confirming therefore our other evidence for the ancient existence of these books—while, associated as these authors are with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, it proves at least the degree of veneration in which they were held by the author of this Apocryphal writing.

Tobit ii. 6. "Remembering that prophecy of Amos, as he said, 'Your feasts shall be turned into mourning, and all your mirth into lamentation.'"—An express quotation from Amos viii. 10. And like quotations may be had from the Apocrypha, of Jeremiah, Malachi, Joshua, Judges, Samuel—besides a large body of evidence scarcely less effective for most of the other books of the Old Testament.

We may add, that most invaluable confirmations are to be found in the book of Ecclesiasticus—of which I shall only instance the attestations of its author, in favour of Ezekiel and Nehemiah. Eccles. c. xlix.

flourished a little after the middle of the second century. He travelled into Palestine on purpose to learn the number of the books of the Old Testament. Eusebius says of his catalogue that it contains those scriptures of the Old Testament which are universally acknowledged. The only difference in it from our present Old Testament, is that he does not mention the book of Esther. The difference, however, it is probable, is only apparent. The likelihood is that Esther was appended to some other book, as Ruth was to the book of Judges; and that neither could be named therefore in those catalogues which observed that particular kind of distinction. At all events, the book of Esther has abundance of other evidence to rest upon.

4. But without dwelling any further on the exscriptural evidence which there is for the canon of the Old Testament, let us now attend to the evidence which might be found on this subject, in both the Old Testament and the New—which, instead of scripture speaking for itself, is one part of scripture composed perhaps by a different author and in a different age speaking for another part of it. We behold a succession of authors in the Old Testament, and a large contemporaneous group of authors in the New; and who, on every principle by which we estimate the credit and the confidence due to written testimonies, is each of them ten-fold more valuable, than if, instead of being ranked as a sacred, he had been ranked as an Apocryphal or profane writer. The circumstance of his being reckoned worthy of such a dis-

tinction in ancient times, is the very reason why in modern times we should place all the firmer reliance on him. The Bible is not one book, but an aggregate of many; and if, viewing it as such, we were to compute aright the force of that argument which lies in the concurrence of distinct and independent witnesses—we should find, not only for the facts of scripture history, but for the deference and respect in which the various writers particularly of the Old Testament were held, a stronger chain of testimony, and on the whole, a brighter galaxy of light and evidence, than can be exhibited in any collection or credibility which might be framed of the best extracts from all other authors.

5. But before considering in detail, the scriptural evidence for each particular book of the Old Testament—there is a certain general evidence, of this very species too, that is applicable to them all; and which attaches to these Hebrew writings such proofs of genuineness and authority, as are quite unexampled of any other documents that have been transmitted to us from ancient times.

6. First—there can be no doubt in respect to the Jewish nation, that one of their most resolute and characteristic principles, in every family where principle had the ascendancy, was a respect for their law; and, by consequence, for the books which contained that law, as well as for all other books received by their nation as of divine authority. We cannot imagine a greater security for the faithful transmission of these books, than the obligation under which every conscientious Hebrew

felt himself to lie, of diligently instructing his children both in the observances and history of his own people. For this being the general habit of the well-principled among them, we have the concurrent evidence of many different writers, not the less distinct from, and therefore not the less corroborative of each other, that they happen to be placed side by side within the limits of one volume. They were placed there, because of the respect held for them in former ages; and they should not therefore suffer on this account, in the estimation of later ages. Even so early as the days of Abraham, the father and prototype of the Jewish nation, we find this religious training of his own family singled out as the habit that most recommended him to the favour of God. "For I know him that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."* It is solemnly enjoined that the words of God, not as handed from one to another by oral tradition, but as committed to writing and so forming the words of the book of a law,† should be taught by parents to their families. "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou

* Gen. xviii. 19. † Deut. xxviii. 61; xxix. 21; xxxi. 26.

shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."* "And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law."† This habit of transmission from father to son was not confined to the statutes and books of the nation; but it extended to their monuments, and the remarkable passages of their history. The stones of Gilgal may be quoted as a distinct example of this. "And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land."‡ "As for me and my house," says Joshua, "we will serve the Lord."§ The stress laid on household or family tuition among the Jews, may be traced downward through the succeeding books of the Old Testament; and in passages greatly too frequent for the exhibition of them all. The tremendous destruction that came upon Eli's house is represented, in the first book of Samuel, to have been the consequence of his neglect of this duty. "And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his

* Deut. vi. 6—9. † Deut. xxxii. 46
‡ Joshua iv. 21, 22. § Joshua xxiv. 15.

house; when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him, that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever."* In short, we may notice throughout the Old Testament everywhere, the indications of that parental tuition in the knowledge of their national religion, which seems to have been quite a habit and a principle among the Jews. That "which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us, we will not hide from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children."† There was thus what might be termed a general family habit among the Jews, which made them all the more effectual keepers of the divine oracles—this being one great purpose of their selection by God as His peculiar people. It formed a great security, not

* 1 Samuel iii. 11—14.

† Psalm lxxviii. 3—6. See further in confirmation of this argument—Exod. xii. 26, 27. Deut. iv. 10; v. 29; xii. 28; xxix. 29; xxx. 2; xxxi. 13. Josh. iv. 6; xxii. 24—28. 1 Kings ii. 4; viii. 25; ix. 6. Psalm lxxxix. 30; cxv. 14; cxxxii. 12. Prov. xxii. 6; xxix. 15. Joel i. 3.

for the diffusion alone through the innumerable and unseen privacies of domestic life, but along with this for the certain preservation of their sacred writings—no decree of extermination, by the fiercest persecutors, being able to reach all the copies of a work so spread and multiplied, both within Judea and beyond the confines of it. It is true, there were seasons of general defection; but, in many instances, the books would remain in families, while the families themselves had fallen away from the worship and observation of their forefathers. And besides, there never was a universal defection. There were no less than seven thousand true worshippers, at the time when Elijah thought that he stood alone in his adherence to the ancient faith; and to them their scriptures would be all the dearer, as the choicest relicts which remained to them of the religion they loved—treasures not the less precious in their eyes, if, as in the days of cruel Antiochus, they were hidden treasures, because it was death to be found in the possession of them. Even then, when the book had so far disappeared from the Jewish court as to be there unknown—insomuch that to have found a single copy of it in the days of Josiah was tantamount to a discovery*—even then, it must, though lurking in privacy, have existed in great numbers among the recesses of Jewish society: And this forms our first general argument for the Hebrew scriptures which were acknowledged as such in the days of our Saviour,

* 2 Kings xxii. 8.

being the identical scriptures that had been acknowledged all along, throughout the successive generations of the children of Israel.

7. But again, never was such an apparatus instituted in any nation for the maintenance of a religious polity, as among the Jews. A whole tribe was set apart for things sacred; and we may be assured, that a principal care, would be those sacred writings of which they were the special depositaries and guardians. Never did there exist such a number of professional men, whose appropriate business it was to watch over the books of their faith—such an agency for their transcription, so as to multiply their copies, whether for selling them out or for teaching them to the people. In like manner, as each father was the constituted instructor of his own family—so were their priests and Levites, everywhere, who acted the part of instructors to the population at large. And accordingly, we read of this as their peculiar employment, in those days of reform and restoration—when, after the suspension of these their ordinary engagements, they were again set to their accustomed work—marking what the established habit was, in good and peaceful and prosperous times. In the days of Jehoshaphat, we are told, that "he sent Levites and priests; and they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people."* We read of a similar great reform in the time of good

* 2 Chron. xvii. 3, 9.

king Hezekiah;* and also of Josiah, who, after having made discovery in the temple of the book of the law, took care that its contents should be made known to the people. "And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small; and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the Lord."† And the like was done by Ezra on the return of the people from the Babylonish captivity, who, from a pulpit of wood, read the book of the law of Moses to a large assembly of men and women; and appointed priests and Levites who might cause the people to understand the law—and "so they read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."‡ We might well imagine that with so large an ecclesiastical body, there must have existed an immense number of safe and authentic repositories for the sacred writings; and, though it is only of one such repository that we are distinctly told in scripture, yet the intelligent reader will not fail to perceive, by the history of that single instance, how perfect a security we have for the incorrupt

* 2 Chron. xxix—xxxi. † 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30.

‡ Neh. viii. 8. It has been well observed on this passage that it clearly proves of the Israelites, that they must have had copies of their sacred writings during as well as subsequent to the Jewish captivity—seeing that when the people requested Ezra to produce the law of Moses, they did not entreat him to get it dictated anew to them (Neh. viii. 1); but that he would bring forth the *book of the law of Moses which the Lord had commanded to Israel.*

transmission of the Old Testament, from the time of its original composition to the days of our Saviour. We mean the deposition of the book of the law of Moses in or beside the ark of the testimony.* "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather thy people together, men, and women, and children, and the stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law; and that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it." "And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord

* It has been much disputed, both among Jewish doctors and Christian fathers, whether the book was deposited inside or outside the ark—and whether in a chest close to the ark of the covenant, or in a little cell annexed to it. Our own inclination is for assigning it an exterior place, within the Holy of Holies, but without the ark of the covenant.

your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee."* These passages are of immense value, as demonstrative of the care taken for the diffusion of religious knowledge among the people; and the latter particularly so, as affording a most signal demonstration of the safe keeping of their sacred records. For there is great reason to believe, that, after the book of the law of Moses was deposited in the ark, copies of all the other canonical writings, when once their authority was established, were placed there along with it. Certain it is, that, over and above the Pentateuch, we read of words written by Joshua,† *in the book of the law of God;* and which would therefore, in all probability, have the same high place of memorial assigned to it—and, more especially, as they were the words of a solemn and enduring covenant between God and the people. It is true that when the temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, all the autographs that had been deposited there were most probably destroyed along with it. But there is every likelihood that, when the temple was rebuilt, and the canon of the Old Testament was established by Ezra and his colleagues—an ark was constructed for the reception of a copy of it, and placed in the Holy of Holies. It forms a strong confirmation of this, that, in the triumph of

* Deut. xxxi. 9—13, 24—26. We would further direct the attention of the reader to 2 Chron. v. 4, 5, where is recorded the transference of the ark and of all the holy vessels to the temple. We cannot doubt that on that solemn occasion when the tabernacle and all that was in it was brought up, the book of the law would be similarly deposited as before.

† Josh. xxiv. 26.

Titus at Rome, of which Josephus was both the historian and the eye-witness, the Book of the Law was carried in procession along with the other spoils of the temple. "But for those that were taken in the temple of Jerusalem, they made the greatest figure of them all; that is the golden table, of the weight of many talents; the candlestick also, that was made of gold, though its construction were now changed from that which we made use of: for its middle shaft was fixed upon a basis, and the small branches were produced out of it to a great length, having the likeness of a trident in their position, and had every one a socket made of brass for a lamp at the tops of them. These lamps were in number seven, and represented the dignity of the number seven among the Jews; and the last of all the spoils, was carried the *law of the Jews*."* This book of the law, Josephus informs us, was not deposited in the temple which Vespasian built to Peace, along with the golden vessels and instruments that were taken out of the temple at Jerusalem. This book, along with the purple veils of the holy place, the emperor reserved for himself, and kept in his own royal palace. And accordingly, it is a very general faith among learned men, that an authentic copy of all the canonical and authorized scriptures, was placed as they were successively written, in the sanctuary; and which copy could be appealed to, if indeed there ever was occasion for it, in every question of doubtful or different readings—and that thus, a pal-

* Josephus, Jewish War, Book VII. chap. V. § 5.

pable distinction was kept up between the sacred and the apocryphal writings. Epiphanius says of the Apocrypha, that, "though useful and profitable, they were not taken in among the scriptures. And therefore, *they were not placed in the ark of the covenant.*"* Damascenus also testifies of the apocryphal writings, that, "however good and beautiful, they were not ranked with the canonical writings, and *not deposited in the ark.*"† So that, though offered by their authors to the church, they were not thought worthy of a place beside the canonical and authorized writings, and therefore were not laid along with these in the ecclesiastical repository or ark. It is doubtless from this circumstance that the fathers termed the canonical writings ενδιαθετοι—because they understood, that, when admitted into the canon, they were at the same time admitted into the sanctuary, and placed by the ark of the covenant; whereas, on the other hand, the αποκρυφοι may have received their name, because they were restrained ἀπο της αγιας κρυπτης, from that *holy crypt*, that sacred repository, in which the canonical writings were preserved. This then is thought to have been the practice, both before and after the Jewish captivity; and it does seem a very formal and distinct acquittal of the trust which had been laid on that people, to whom, in the language of Paul, "had been committed the oracles of God." Irrespective, however, of the evidence that exists for this especial obser-

* Εν τη της διαθηκης κιβωτῳ.

† Ευαρεστοι μεν και καλαι, αλλ' ουκ αριθμουνται ουδε εκειντο εν τη κιβωτῳ.

vance—it is obvious, that both in the general habit of Jewish families, and in the institution of so numerous and well-appointed a body of ecclesiastics, there did obtain among the Jews, the most ample and efficient means for the fulfilment of this great purpose. The likelihood, at the same time, of this method of custody and preservation, is, we think, well made out, both by the quotations from scripture, and the other testimonies which we have now exhibited; and receives moreover a certain confirmation, from the practice in Jewish synagogues at this day—where a copy of the law is still deposited in a sacred receptacle, called by Tertullian *Judaicum armarium*, a little chest or press termed *armoire* in French, and thence transformed into *aumory* in Scotland. We do not think the full and absolute vindication of this temple process indispensable to our present argument; and we are more disposed to regard it, as but one beautiful and picturesque representation of it—and through which, we are made to see, as if in picture, or to read as on a visible and enduring monument, the safety and integrity of the Old Testament records. The same process, however, was substantially repeated, we have no doubt, in the frequent synagogues of the land—nay, in many thousands of private families, alike zealous of their law and of the way of their forefathers; and so as to afford a guarantee for the genuineness and preservation of the Hebrew scriptures, of which there is no similar example in ancient history. The Jewish people were separated from the nations of the earth, for, among other reasons, the keeping

and transmission of the elder revelations to the latter ends of the world; and this one purpose at least, of their marked and singular economy, has been fully accomplished by them.

8. But, whatever obscurity may be conceived to hang over the methods of this more remote and ancient dispensation, we at length emerge into full assurance, when we come to the days of the New Testament; and gather thence our third general argument, the strongest of all, we think, for the canonicity of the Old Testament writings. Nothing can be more certain than the use, the frequent use, made by the Jews from very early times, of written language as the vehicle of their alleged revelations. And the books to which they were thus committed, were signalized above all others by the religious estimation in which they were held. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them."* "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God"† "And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides: on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables."‡ "And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew

* Exod. xxiv. 12. † Ex. xxxi. 18. ‡ Ex. xxxii. 15, 16.

thee two tables of stone like unto the first; and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest."* "And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly; and the Lord gave them unto me. And I turned myself, and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me."† "And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life."‡ "And it shall be, on the day when you pass over Jordan unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster: And thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over," &c.‖ These quotations serve to prove how early writing was resorted to, in the communications between heaven and earth. The book that was "before the priests the Levites," we have no doubt, was that laid up in the ark of the covenant, from which each king was required to write a copy; and we cannot imagine a more effectual device for the preservation of an autograph, and for the transmission of a book in its original integrity to future ages. But beside this, we may observe in these

* Ex. xxxiv. 1. † Deut. x. 4. 5. ‡ Deut. xvii. 18, 19.
‖ Deut. xxvii. 2, 3.

passages, what the written revelations were, in their earliest and most rudimental form—before they were expanded into books, whether smaller or larger, for circulation among the people. "Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it to the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel." "Moses therefore wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel."* "Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord."† "Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever."‡ "The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book."‖ "The word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah."§ "So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written against Babylon."¶ "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end."** These last quotations exhibit to us the origination of books, or parts of books, in the Old Testament; and did we offer, in addition to

* Deut. xxxi. 19, 22.

† 1 Sam. x. 25. This act of laying up what he had written before the Lord, may be regarded as another example of the deposition of the Sacred Writings, in a sanctuary or consecrated place.

‡ Is. xxx. 8. ‖ Jer. xxx. 1, 2. § Jer. xlv. 1.

¶ Jer. li. 60. ** Daniel xii. 4.

this, to present all the passages in which these books are referred to, all the traces that might be gathered along the course of the sacred history of the respect and estimation in which they were held —it would swell our extracts into many pages. We shall do it in part, when we investigate the evidence for the particular books, as, in those very extracts, there lies the essence of what we hold to be far the most valuable kind of proof for the authority of the Hebrew scriptures. But it is enough at present, under the head of our third general argument, to state of these books that they were the objects of frequent and familiar recognition by the Jewish people. Their very names, though at first general, and such as were descriptive of a whole class, had at length, by the force of the definite article or by the annexation of an epithet, the exclusive speciality of an appellative. There are innumerable writings on all subjects; but these were *the* writings, and αἱ γραφαι or ἡ γραφη was appropriated to those writings which were esteemed by the Hebrews as divine: Or, when a particular and express quotation was made, it was under the form of "this scripture," αὑτη γραφη: Or they were distinguished by another phrase, "the Sacred Writings," γραφαι ἱεραι, sometimes τα ἱερα γραμματα: Or, lastly, they were named "the oracles of God," τα λογια του Θεου. These names were as much restricted to certain writings, and there was as little possibility of their being applied to any other—as "the Bible,"* or the "Scrip-

* Bible—originally and generally a book; and "the book," ὁ βιβλος, became the appellative of our present scriptures.

tures," or the Old and New Testament would in the present day. They were the *voces signatæ*, that marked out certain books collected by the Jews into a volume or volumes, and in universal recognition among that people. That a whole nation should make use of the same names, and without any difference in the application of them, proved a common understanding as to what the books were (and no others) which were held to be of scriptural rank amongst them. Now the strength of our third general argument lies in this—that our Saviour and His Apostles joined in this common use, and fell into this common understanding. They make use of the term "scriptures," without explanation, as if there had to be the adjustment of any difference between them and the Jewish people, on the question of what the Scriptures really were. There was in truth no such question betwixt them. What the Jewish people at large understood to be the scriptures, Christ and His Apostles understood to be the scriptures. In other words, they all acknowledged the same scriptures. We do not speak, at present, of the properties ascribed by Christ and the authors of the New Testament, to these writings of the Old Testament—for this comes more rightly under our view, when discussing the question of the inspiration of these books. But the circumstance of Christ and His Apostles having acknowledged the same Old Testament with the Jews, is all in all on the question of the canon, and of the legitimate place which each of the separate pieces held in this received and authorised col-

lection of writings. When Paul says of the Jews that "to them were committed the oracles of God," he had no different view of these oracles, these λογια, in as far as the written oracles were concerned, from what they had themselves. And in like manner when in speaking to the Jews, he says of the Gospel, that God hath promised it "afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures"*—he does not make use of a designation that expressed to them one set of writings, while to his own mind it expressed another set of writings. To us it is a very strong circumstance, that what they held to be the "oracles of God," and the "holy scriptures," he held to be the oracles of God and the holy scriptures also. There was a common understanding between them on this point; and the same common understanding between our Saviour and His countrymen, when He told them, to "search the scriptures"—when He asked them, "Did ye never read in the scriptures?" when He thus charged them, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures"—when He argued with them, "How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled"—when He assured them "but the scriptures must be fulfilled" —when He quotes their sacred volume by their own designation, "as the scripture hath said"—and, lastly, when, making use of the same designation, He ascribes to it this property, that "the scripture cannot be broken."† Our Saviour would never, in directing His countrymen to search the scrip-

* Rom. i. 2.

† Matt. xxi. 42, xxii. 29, xxvi. 54. Mark xii. 24, xiv. 49. John v. 39, vii. 38, x. 35.

tures, have made use of a term, that had the effect of sending them to the perusal of a different set of works or writings from what He Himself intended. But this would undoubtedly have taken place, had He meant by the term "scriptures," any other collection of books than what they meant by it. Instead of which He made use of their own term, and gave no explanation—which He would have done, had His sense of it been different from theirs. But He knew what the common understanding was; and on this He proceeded, for He Himself shared in it. The scriptures of their estimation were the scriptures of His estimation also. Or, in other words, we have the authority of Christ and His Apostles, for the received canon of the Old Testament in their days being the true canon. Nor can we imagine aught so resistless in the way of proof, as the utter absence of any charge against the Jews, on the part of the first teachers of Christianity—as if they had vitiated or adulterated, or in any way mutilated and changed their own scriptures. When the Apostle Paul says, that to them were committed the oracles of God, there is not one whisper of insinuation that they had in the least corrupted, or been at all unfaithful in their care and custody of these writings. But, strongest of all, our Saviour never laid any such condemnation upon them. Had there been any ground for such a condemnation, He, of all others, would, with the utmost promptitude and power, have charged it home upon them. It is true that they had made void the commandments of God, but in another way than by altering or vitiating the re-

cord of these commandments—by oral tradition; and he was not slow in charging them for this delinquency. We may be very sure, that, had there been any practising on their part with the scriptures themselves—we may be very sure, that He, who denounced their traditions, would have denounced, as an offence still more flagrant, the sacrilegious liberties they had taken with the oracles of God. Instead of which, in opposing their traditions, He did it by means of an express quotation from the writings of Moses—making use of their scriptures as they stood, and never giving us the least intimation in the course of His public ministry, notwithstanding His frequent allusions and appeals to them, that the true scriptures were at all different from the acknowledged and received scriptures. He set aside their traditions, but He did unqualified homage to their scriptures—two things as apart from each other in the days of our Saviour as they are now—as distinct and distinguishable, in fact, as the Hebrew Old Testament is from the Jewish Talmud, in which the traditions have been embodied and have received a local habitation and a name. Had the Jewish scriptures, in our Saviour's days, been mutilated by erasures, or vitiated by admixtures, or right books been displaced, or wrong books inserted in their room—our Saviour would have told us so—or, in other words, had there been a false canon in these days, He would have stated anew for our information the true canon of the Old Testament. The information given by the Jews themselves in regard to the genuineness of their scriptures, thus acquiesced

in and thus deferred to by the Author of Christianity, we receive as at the mouth of the Saviour. The Jews and Christians separated from each other, with the very same list however of Old Testament scriptures; and these, laying aside the great Popish adulteration and a few minor ones, remain unchanged with each of the parties to the present day. We cannot imagine a more secure basis for the canon of the Old Testament, than the authentication of that very list by Christ and His Apostles—thus giving the benefit of all the evidence for the new, to the scriptures of the elder dispensation.

9. We shall now enter, in detail, on the scriptural evidence for each of the particular books of the Old Testament; but, before doing so, let us advert to certain larger divisions into which they were grouped by the Hebrews; and the traces of which are to be found in the Bible itself. There was the book of their law, consisting of our Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, and originally written in one volume. There was the book of the prophets, which yet comprehended certain of the historical, and excluded certain of the prophetical writings. There was lastly the book of the Hagiographa or Holy writings, the inspiration of which was not doubted by the Jews as to its reality, but which were distinguished from the former in their reckoning by the mode of the inspiration. Moses the author of the first class of these books was universally held to be the most illustrious of all their sacred writers, being the only one admitted to direct and personal converse

with God.* The authors of the second class were conceived to have had their communications made to them by dreams and visions, or even by a voice. The authors of the third class were regarded too as divinely inspired men, only that instead of being honoured by any sensible manifestations of the Divinity, they wrote under the impulse of a silent and authoritative guidance on their own minds. They were besides conceived to have no public mission as prophets, and so neither were their works though inspired read publicly. The circumstance of the book of Daniel being ranked among the Hagiographa, is ascribed to the power of evidence which lies in it for the truth of Christianity, and to the consequent apprehension lest if read in their synagogues, they might lead any to embrace this religion. This distinction might appear to degrade certain of the writers of the Old Testament beneath the rank of infallible teachers from Heaven; but it will be found not to affect the reality of their inspiration, only the mode of it —and even for this there seems to have been no solid ground—the reasons alleged for it by the learned among the Jews being of a very fanciful or legendary character. One great benefit of the scriptural evidence that we shall allege for each of the several books is, that it must restore the confidence which this distinction might have otherwise impaired—as it will occasionally be found, that there is a greater weight and splendour of this evidence for certain of the books which have

* Numb. xii. 6—8.

been placed in the lowest class, than for many of those which have had a higher rank and precedency assigned to them. Whatever authority may be attached to the opinion of the Jews, respecting the methods and degrees of inspiration which obtained among the writers of the Old Testament—there can be no doubt of the threefold distribution, as if into three volumes, that was made of them. It is recognized in the scriptures themselves; and we should lose a certain portion of the evidence that we are now in quest of, if we omitted the testimonies given, not separately to the individual books, but aggregately to one or other of these larger collections. We shall find traces at least for the book of the law as one separate book, consisting of the five books of Moses, but isolated from all other scripture, even in the Old Testament; and in the New we have abundant evidence both for it and for the other two besides. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets."* "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John."† "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."‡ "And David himself sayeth in the book of Psalms."§ "And he said to him these are the words which I spake to you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me."‖ "For it is written in the book of Psalms, let his habitation be desolate,"** &c.

* Matt. v. 17. † Matt. xi. 13. ‡ Matt. xxii. 40.
§ Luke xx. 42. ‖ Luke xxiv. 44. ** Acts i. 20.

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue to this day witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come."* "And when he had appointed them a day, there came many to him in his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening."† "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets."‡ "But even unto this day when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."‖ That the book of the law was not confined to the legal part of the Pentateuch, is evident from its being appealed to for the historical facts of the narrative, as in Gal. iv. 21—26, where the story of Hagar and her son is ushered in by a challenge on those who are of the law to hear the law. And there is even reason to believe that the whole of the Old Testament was at times designated as "the Law" or "Book of the Law." The quotation in John x. 34, seems to have been taken from the Psalms, and yet is said to be taken from the "Law." The people in John xii. 34, allege their having heard out of the law, that which must have been read or told to them out of the Psalms. And our Saviour in John xv. 25, makes a quotation from the Psalms as from the law. The truth is, that the names

* Acts xxvi. 22. † Acts xxviii. 23. ‡ Rom. iii. 21. ‖ 2 Cor. iii. 15.

properly and primitively annexed to one portion of the Jewish scriptures was at length extended to the whole—as being all of the same complete and rightful authority over the faith and consciences of men.*

10. Still however the Pentateuch is often singled out from the other scriptures, by its original and appropriate designation of the Book of the Law. So that, beside the scriptural evidence for the individual books of the Pentateuch, there is much of that evidence to be found in the general references made to the Pentateuch on the whole, under the title of the Law or Book of the Law. But of the many citations which might be produced, a very few must suffice. "Observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee." "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth."† "As Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses."‡ "And keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes and his commandments and his judgments and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses."‖ "But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded

* There are besides quotations in the New Testament as from the law, of words only to be found in the prophets—so that their whole Bible must have often been designated the "Book of the Law," and hence the strong probability that the book taken from the temple and carried at the Roman triumph, though termed by Josephus the book of the law, was the temple copy of the whole Hebrew scriptures.

† Josh. i. 7, 8. ‡ Josh. viii. 31. ‖ 1 Kings ii. 3.

saying,"* &c. "And Hilkiah the high-priest said, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord."† David "left before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the Lord which He commanded Israel."‡ "Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the Lord, by the hand of the priests, the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, to offer the burnt-offerings of the Lord as it is written in the law of Moses."‖ "Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt-offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God."§ "As it is written in the book of Moses."¶ "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." "And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month."** "On that day they read in the book of Moses, in the audience of the people."†† "Therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God." "As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us."‡‡ We could produce quotations

* 2 Kings xiv. 6. † 2 Kings xxii. 8.
‡ 1 Chr. xvi. 37—40. ‖ 2 Chr. xxiii. 18. § Ezra iii. 2.
¶ Ezra vi. 18. ** Neh. viii. 8, 14. †† Neh. xiii. 1.
‡‡ Dan. ix 11, 13.

equally express, but too numerous for insertion, that might be gathered from the New Testament.* These are the testimonies of different ages, taken from different books, and marking the existence and authority of a document entituled the book of the law or the book of Moses, in exceeding different periods of history—from the days of Joshua, bordering immediately on those of Moses, and at intervals downward to the age of Christ and His apostles. And what we have now alleged in behalf of the book of the law *in cumulo*, can also, as we shall see presently, be alleged of its individual parts. And it should be remarked, that each part shares in the benefit of such general testimonies, or testimonies in the gross, as have been just now adduced by us. A reference when made, not to a particular book, but to the book of the law, is an expression of confidence, an act of homage, done to the authority of the whole. A quotation from any one of the five books in the Pentateuch, if given not as a quotation from that particular book, but as from the Pentateuch at large, speaks for the respect in which the whole Pentateuch was held. In the language of Scottish law, it homologates the whole record. If a reference to the book of Numbers be made in *this way*, the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, all participate in the advantage of

* Instead of exhibiting the words of these quotations in the text, let it be enough that we point out the places of them here. Mark xii. 19, 26. Luke ii. 23; x. 26; xvi. 29; xxiv. 27. John i. 45. Acts xv. 21; xxiv. 14. Rom. x. 5. 1 Cor. ix. 9. Gal. iii. 10. Add to these the whole substance and texture of the epistle to the Hebrews.

it. But let us pursue this scriptural, this best of all evidence, for the canon of the Old Testament, more into its details.

11. *Genesis.*] The most satisfactory quotations are those which at once present the extract and name the book or the writer whence it is taken—yet, without naming either book or writer, such may be the identity or even close resemblance of the words extracted, as to demonstate the reality of the quotation, and so to demonstrate the existence of the elder work at the time that the later work was produced. Even when the passage exhibited in proof of this does not amount to an extract, there may at least be an undoubted reference and allusion in it to the earlier publication. And there is a certain manner of introducing these quotations which demonstrates, not only the existence of the prior document, but the respect and religious authority in which it is held. The phrase "it is written," εστι γεγραμμενον, when not accompanied with the mention of any book, is as much the appropriated phrase for indicating that the book referred to is a sacred one, as the term γραφη is of scripture. And thus "behold it is written," is tantamount, saving when the book is specified and is known not to be canonical, is tantamount to "behold it is in scripture"—or we have it in scripture. And thus might we gather proofs out of the posterior scriptures, not for the existence only but for the divine authority of the book of Genesis. We shall only in the text instance from the Old Testament, the continuous allusion made to its contents, in the earlier half of the cv. Psalm. And we can

only afford room for a very few of the many and decisive examples that might be adduced from the New Testament. "And man became a living soul," Gen. ii. 7. "And so it is written, The first man was made a living soul," 1 Cor. xv. 45.—"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh," Gen. ii. 24. "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh," Matt. xix. 5. This last may be considered as an express quotation—being ushered in by the question, "Have ye not read?"—"And he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness," Gen. xv. 6. "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness," Rom. iv. 3. —"For a father of many nations have I made thee," Gen. xvii. 5. "As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations," Rom. iv. 17.—"Wherefore she said unto Abraham, cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac," Gen. xxi. 10. "Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman," Gal. iv. 30.—"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, Gen. xxii. 18. "Saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed," Acts iii. 25.—To understand the force of those quotations where neither the book nor the author of it is named, it should be recollected that

when the same history is retailed in books of very different ages, the coincidence between them forms a strong presumption that the one book is referred to in the other—as strong as the improbability that the history, whether as it occurred or as it was told centuries before, could have been preserved by oral tradition. Hence the far greater likelihood that the histories, compendious though they be of the children of Israel in the book of Psalms, were taken from the Pentateuch, than transmitted verbally from ancient times. We should thus too appreciate the continuous allusion to Genesis, with several quotations from it, in the speech of Stephen, as recorded in the 7th chapter of Acts. In these and many like passages, do we find the scriptural rank of the book of Genesis or the legitimacy of its place in the canon clearly and fully acknowledged in the New Testament.*

* See further—

Gen. i. 10.—Ps. xxxiii. 7.
i. 18.—Jer. xxxi. 35.
v. 1.—1 Chr. i. 1.
x. 2. i. 5.
x. 6. i. 8.
x. 22. i. 17.
x. 25. i. 19.
xi. 10. i. 17.
xi. 16. i. 19.
xi. 26. i. 26.
xi. 31.—Neh. ix. 7.
xii. 1.—Acts vii. 3.
xv. 5.—Rom. iv. 18.
xv. 13, 14.—Acts vii. 6, 7.
xviii. 18.—Acts iii. 25.
xxi. 2.—Heb. xi. 11.
xxi. 12.—Rom. ix. 7.
xxii. 16, 17.—Heb. vi. 13, 14.
Gen. xxv. 2.—1 Chr. i. 32.
xxv. 13.—1 Chr. i. 29.
xxv. 23.—Rom. ix. 12.
xxv. 26.—Hos. xii. 3.
xxvii. 41.—Obad. 10.
xxxii. 26.—Hos. xii. 4.
xxxvi. 4. 10.—1 Chr. i. 35.
xxxvi. 20.—1 Chr. i. 38.
xxxviii. 2, 7. ii. 3.
xlvi. 6.—Josh. xxiv. 4.
xlvi. 8.—1 Chr. v. 1.
xlvi. 10. iv. 24.
xlvi. 11. vi. 1, 16.
xlvi. 13, 17, 21. vii. 1, 6, 30.
1 Chr. viii. 1.
xlvi. 27.—Acts vii. 14.
xlvii. 31.—Heb. xi. 21.
xlviii. 5.—Josh. xiv. 4.
xlix. 4.—1. Chr. v. 1.

12. *Exodus.*] In Mark xii. 26, we have an unquestionable extract from the book of Exodus; and there an express attestation is borne to it as "the book of Moses." This book is also identified with the book of the law of Moses by Joshua, when he quotes, in the 8th chapter and 31st verse, the precept in regard to an altar of stone not being of hewn stone, and taken from the 25th verse of the 20th chapter of Exodus. There is besides a lengthened continuous allusion to the contents of it in the speech of Stephen, recorded in the 7th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles—as also by Paul in the 11th chapter of the Hebrews. It has been computed that there are no less than twenty-five citations of this book by Christ and His Apostles, beside the references which are made to it in the Old Testament, of which the larger specimens are to be found in the 78th and 105th and 106th Psalms and in the prayer of Nehemiah. The following are a few of the more particular instances.—"And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him; for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you," Ex. xiii. 19. "And the bones of Joseph which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem," Josh. xxiv. 32.—"Neither shall ye break a bone thereof," Ex. xii. 46. "For these things were done, that the scriptures should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken," John xix. 36.—"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to

give them light; to go by day and night," Ex. xiii. 21. "Moreover, thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go," Neh. ix. 12.—"Thou shalt not curse the ruler of thy people," Ex. xxii. 28. "For it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people," Acts xxiii. 5.—"I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy," Ex. xxxiii. 19. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion," Rom. ix. 15.—These quotations are perfectly decisive. We subjoin the places where other references will be found; and from which it will be seen that the scriptural rank of this book is expressly recognized —more especially in the New Testament.*

* Ex. iii. 5.—Josh. v. 15.
iii. 6.—Matt. xxii. 32.
Mark xii. 26.
Luke xx. 37.
vi. 14, 15, 16, 18.—1 Chr. v. 3.
iv. 24.
vi. 1, 2.
vii. 20.—Ps. lxxviii. 44.
ix. 16.—Rom. ix. 17.
xiii. 2.—Luke ii. 23.
xiii. 12.—Ezek. xliv. 30.
xiii. 21.—Ps. lxxviii. 14.
xiv. 9.—Josh. xxiv. 6.
xiv. 21, 22, 28.—Josh. iv. 23. Ps. lxxviii. 13. cvi. 11.
xv. 14, 16.—Josh. ii. 9.
xvi. 14.—Ps. lxxviii. 24.
xvi. 18.—2 Cor. viii. 15.
xvi. 35.—Josh. v. 12.
Ex. xvi. 35.—Neh. ix. 15.
xvii. 6, 14.—Ps. lxxvii. 15. cv. 41.
1 Sam. xv. 3.
xix. 6.—1 Pet. ii. 9.
xx. 2, 4, 9.—Ps. lxxxi. 10. xcvii. 7.
Ezek. xx. 12.
xx. 12.—Eph. vi. 2, 3.
xx. 12—16.—Matt. xix. 18, 19.
xxi. 2, 17.—Jer. xxxiv. 14. Prov. xx. 20.
xxii. 31.—Ezek. xliv. 31.
xxiii. 23, 28, 33.—Josh. xxiv. 11, 12. xxiii. 13.
Judges ii. 3.
xxiv. 8.—Heb. ix. 20.
xxv. 40. viii. 5.
xxxi. 2.—1 Chr. ii. 20.

13. *Leviticus.*] The epistle to the Hebrews may be regarded as throughout one sustained testimony in favour of this book—the one, in the language of Augustine, treating "*de Christo exhibendo;*" the other "*de Christo exhibito.*" The same doctrine which is latent in the one, is made patent in the other—even that doctrine of the New, which is invested in the drapery of the Old Dispensation. It is a folded drapery in the book of Leviticus; but it is an unfolded drapery in the epistle to the Hebrews; and we may therefore well expect a continued reference from the later to the earlier composition. But indeed the whole history of the Jews may be regarded as a running commentary on this portion of scripture; and it were therefore a work of immense labour to develop the whole evidence that might be adduced for the ancient existence of this book, and for the deference that was paid to it. We must restrain ourselves to a very few examples out of the countless multitude. "Every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt," Lev. ii. 13. "Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt," Mark ix. 49.—"And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons," Lev. xii. 8. "And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons," Luke ii. 24.—"Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments; which if a man do he shall live in them," Lev. xviii. 5. "And I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall ever live in

them," Ezek. xx. 11—"Ye shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy," Lev. xix. 1. "Because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy," 1 Pet. i. 16.—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," Lev. xix. 18. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," Matt. xxii. 39, Rom. xiii. 9, Gal. v. 14. "According to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," James ii. 8.—"Eye for eye, tooth for tooth," Lev. xxiv. 20. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," Matth. v. 38.—"And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people," Lev. xxvi. 12. "As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," 2 Cor. vi. 16. We cannot take leave of this book, without adverting to the rich mine of evidence, that awaits those students of the Mosaic ritual, who have the patience to explore and the taste to enjoy those recondite harmonies, which obtain between the Christianity in figure of the Old, and the Christianity in substance and express declaration of the New Testament.*

* It is a beautiful saying of Jerome, "In Levitico singula sacrificia, imo singulæ pene syllabæ, et vestes Aaron, et totus ordo Leviticus spirant cœlestia sacramenta." The doctors of the ancient Church tell us, "literam hujus libri inutilem aut etiam noxiam, si spolietur spirituali intelligentia." For further scriptural references to the book of Leviticus, see—

Lev. viii. 12.—Ps. cxxxiii. 2.
x. 1.—1 Chr. xxiv. 2.
xi. 44.—1 Pet. i. 15.
xii. 3.—Luke ii. 21.
John vii. 22.
xiii. 46.—2 Kings xv. 5.
xiv. 2—4.—Matt. viii. 4.
Mark i. 44.
Luke v. 14.
Lev. xvi. 34.—Heb. ix. 7.
xviii. 5.—Gal. iii. 12.
xviii. 21.—2 Kings xxiii. 10.
xix. 12, 15, 17, 18.—Matt. v. 33, 43.
James v. 12.

14. *Numbers.*] There are several striking and decisive testimonies to this book which might be singled out from that crowd of references scattered over the Old and the New Testament. Of these the first which occur to us are the type of the brazen serpent—the red heifer by Paul in the epistle to the Hebrews—and the Nazarite by Matthew, ii. 23. The references from the earlier scriptures, as in Joshua, have often this remarkable distinctness in them, that they state a commandment to be found in the book of Numbers, as the commandment of Moses or of God by Moses—thus connecting with it the name of this prophet and inspired man. The following is a part of these scriptural testimonies. "And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting," Numb. xi. 4. "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted," 1 Cor. x. 6.—"My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house," Numb. xii. 7. "Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was in all his house," Heb. iii. 2.—"And the Lord spake unto Aaron,

Prov. xxiv. 23.
James ii. 9.
1 John ii. 11.
Matt. xviii. 15.
Lev. xix. 36.—Prov. xi. 1.
xx. 10.
xx. 9, 10. Prov. xx. 20.
Matt. xv. 4.
John viii. 5.
xxii. 8.—Ezek. xliv. 31.
xxiii. 3.—Luke xiii. 14.
xxiv. 9.—Matt. xii. 4.
Lev. xxv. 36.—Ezek. xviii. 8.
xxii. 12.
xxv. 39.—Jer. xxxiv. 14.
xxv. 43.—Eph. vi. 9.
Col. iv. 1.
xxvi. 1, 8, 14, 17.—Josh.
xxiii. 10.
Ps. xcvii. 7.
Lam. ii. 17.
Mal. ii. 2.
Prov. xxviii. 1.
xxvi. 44.—Rom. xi. 2.

Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part, and thine inheritance, among the children of Israel," Numb. xviii. 20. "Only unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as he said unto them," Josh. xiii. 14. "But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance: the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them," Josh. xiii. 33.—"And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole: and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived," Numb. xxi. 9. "He removed the high places and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan," 2 Kings xviii. 4. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up," John iii. 14.—"And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass; and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?" Numb. xxii. 28. "But was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet," 2 Peter ii. 16.—"Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses; but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die," Num. xxxv. 30. "He that despised Moses' law died

without mercy under two or three witnesses," Heb. x. 28.*

15. *Deuteronomy.*] In this book we are told of two most important securities for its own preservation, if not rather for the preservation of the whole book of the law of Moses. The first is an injunction given to each king, that he should copy this law in a book and read it continually; Deut. xvii. 18, 19. And secondly there is an injunction for reading this law to all Israel once in seven years, for the sake both of the people's knowledge and of their children, Deut. xxxi. 9—13. The practice of far more frequent public reading than this is clearly stated in Acts xv. 21. "For Moses of old time, hath in every city them that

* See further—
Numb. iii. 4.—1 Chr. xxiv. 2.
iii. 13.—Luke ii. 23.
iii. 17.—1 Chr. vi. 1.
ix. 12.—John xix. 36.
ix. 18.—1 Cor. x. 1.
x. 35.—Ps. lxviii. 1, 2.
xi. 1. lxxviii. 21.
xi. 23.—Is. l. 2.
lix. 1.
xi. 31, 33.—Ps. lxxviii. 26, 30, 31.
xiv. 18. ciii. 8.
xiv. 37.—1 Cor. x. 10.
Heb. iii. 17.
Jude 5.
xvi. 1. Jude 11.
xvi. 31.—Ps. cvi. 17.
xx. 13. cvi. 32.
xxi. 6.—1 Cor. x. 9.
xxi. 21.—Judges xi. 19.
xxi. 24.—Josh. xii. 1.
Ps. cxxxv. 10, 11.
Amos ii. 9.
xxii. 5.—Josh. xxiv. 9.
xxii. 23.—Jude 11.
Numb. xxv. 4.—Josh. xxii. 17.
xxv. 7.—Ps. cvi. 30.
xxv. 9.—1 Cor. x. 8.
xxvi. 5.—1 Chr. v. 1.
xxvi. 29.—Josh. xvii. 1.
xxvi. 55.—Josh. xi. 23.
xiv. 2.
xxvi. 65.—1 Cor. x. 5, 6.
xxvii. 1.—Josh. xvii. 3.
xxxi. 8.—Josh. xiii. 21.
xxxi. 16.—2 Pet. ii. 15.
xxxii. 20.—Josh. i. 13, 14.
xxxii. 27.—Josh. iv. 12.
xxxii. 33.—Josh. xiii. 8.
xxii. 4.
xxxiii. 51, 52.—Josh. xi. 12.
xxxiii. 55.—Josh. xxiii. 13.
Judg. ii. 3.
xxxiv. 3.—Josh. xv. 1.
xxxiv. 14.—Josh. xiv. 2, 3.
xxxiv. 17.—Josh. xix. 51.
xxxv. 2. Josh. xxi. 2.
xxxv. 6.—Josh. xx. 2.
xxi. 3, 4.
xxxvi. 2.—Josh. xvii. 3.

preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath-day." It is in this book also we are told of a third great security for the Jewish canon, in the deposition of the book of the law in the ark, Deut. xxxi. 26, as in a place of safe and sufficient custody for those oracles of God which had been committed to the nation. Certain it is that this particular book of Deuteronomy is the subject of clearest references and quotations in other parts of Scripture, as in Rom. xii. 19, "It is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord;" and in Hebrews, x. 30.—"We know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord." These are clearly taken from Deut. xxxii. 35. The phrase, "it is written," when thus introduced, is tantamount to, "we have it in Scripture." It is quite doing scriptural homage to any book, when it is quoted in this way. But we must now begin to limit the number of our examples; for, should we attempt a full presentation of these, the work would be quite interminable. Once more, however, we shall offer, for this book too, a pretty copious list of those notices which are made of it, throughout the Old and New Testament. The following specimens we give at large in the text. "For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire," Deut. iv. 24. "For our God is a consuming fire," Heb. xii. 29. "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God," Deut. vi. 16.—"Jesus said unto him, it is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," Matth. iv. 7.—"Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord

doth man live," Deut. viii. 3. "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God," Luke iv. 4.—"Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve," Deut. x. 20. "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," Matth. iv. 10.—"I will raise thee up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him," Deut. xviii. 18. See also, xviii. 15. "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you," Acts iii. 22. See also, Acts vii. 37.—"He that is hanged is accursed of God"—therefore "his body shall not remain all night upon the tree," Deut. xxi. 23. "For it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," Gal. iii. 13.—"An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever," Deut. xxiii. 3. "On that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever," Neh. xiii. 1.—"When a man hath taken a wife and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and

give it in her hand, and send her out of his house," Deut. xxiv. 1. "And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away," Mark x. 4.—"The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin," Deut. xxiv. 16. "But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children put to death for the fathers: but every man shall be put to death for his own sin," 2 Kings xiv. 6.—"Thou shalt not muzzle the ox, when he treadeth out the corn," Deut. xxv. 4. "For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn," 1 Cor. ix. 9.—"If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her," Deut. xxv. 5. "Master, Moses said, If a man die having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother," Matt. xxii. 24.—"And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones; thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them: Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of whole stones," Deut. xxvii. 5, 6. "As Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of

Moses, An altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron," Josh. viii. 31.—" Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them," Deut. xxvii. 26. " For it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10.—" For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it," Deut. xxx. 11—14.—" Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven—or, who shall descend into the deep? But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart," Rom. x. 6—8.—" I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people, I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation," Deut. xxxii. 21. " Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you," Rom. x. 19.—" Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people," Deut. xxxii. 43. " And again he saith, Rejoice ye Gentiles with his people," Rom. xv. 10.*

* See further—

Deut. iii. 12.—Josh. xiii. 8.
iii. 20. xxii. 4.
iv. 2. i. 7.
iv. 2.—Rev. xxii. 18.
iv. 43.—Josh. xx. 8.
v. 6.—Ps. lxxxi. 10.
v. 10.—Jer. xxxii. 18.

16. *Joshua.*] We must now be more sparing of our quotations. Distinction is made by the Jewish biblists between the elder and the later prophets—or between those who lived prior and posterior to the days of king Uzziah. Certain it is, that Zechariah i. 4, warns the children of Israel against being as their fathers, unto whom the former prophets had cried. And as the book of Joshua is ranked by them as a prophetical book, he has an undisputed title to a place in the

Deut. v. 17.—Math. v. 21.
v. 18.—Luke xviii. 20.
v. 19.—Rom. xiii. 9.
vi. 5.—Math. xxii. 37.
Mark xii. 30.
Luke x. 27.
vii. 20.—Josh. xxiv. 12.
vii. 25. vii. 1, 21.
ix. 3.—Heb. xii. 29.
x. 17.—2 Chr. xix. 7.
Acts x. 34.
Rom. ii. 11.
x. 20.—Luke iv. 8.
xi. 6.—Ps. cvi. 17.
xi. 24.—Josh. i. 3.
xiv. 9.
xi. 29. viii. 33.
xii. 3.—Judges ii. 2.
xii. 5.—1 Kings viii. 29.
2 Chr. vii. 12.
xv. 12.—Jer. xxxiv. 14.
xvii. 6.—Heb. x. 28.
xviii. 1.—1 Cor. ix. 13.
xviii. 15,18.—John i. 45.
Acts vii. 37.
xix. 2.—Josh. xx. 2.
xix. 9. xx. 7.
xix. 15.—Math. xviii. 16.
John viii. 17.
2 Cor. xiii. 1.
xix. 21.—Math. v. 38.
xx. 8.—Judges vii. 3.
Deut. xx. 14.—Josh. viii. 2.
xxiii. 25.—Math. xii. 1.
Mark ii. 23.
Luke vi. 1.
xxiv. 1.—Math. v. 31.
xix. 7.
xxiv. 16.—2 Chr. xxv. 4.
xxv. 3.—2 Cor. xi. 24.
xxv. 4.—1 Tim. v. 18.
xxv. 5.—Mark xii. 19.
Luke xx. 28.
xxv. 7.—Ruth iv. 1, 2, &c.
xxvi. 15.—Is. lxiii. 15.
xxvii. 2.—Josh. iv. 1.
xxvii. 14, &c.—Dan. ix. 11.
xxviii. 15.—Lam. ii. 17.
xxviii. 37.—1 Kings ix. 7.
Jer. xxiv. 9.
xxv. 9.
xxviii. 53.—2 Kings vi. 28.
Lam. iv. 10.
xxix. 9.—Josh. i. 7.
1 Kings ii. 3.
xxix. 24. ix. 8.
Jer. xxii. 8.
xxxi. 23.—Josh. i. 6.
xxxii. 17.—1 Cor. x. 20.
xxxii. 30.—Josh. xxiii. 10.

earlier of the two divisions. We have strong evidence that the book existed in the days of Ahab, though not that Joshua was the writer of it. "And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it," Josh. vi. 26. "In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his younger son Segub, according to the word of the Lord which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun," 1 Kings xvi. 34. Of this, and indeed most other of the historical books, though we have very strong traditions in regard to their human authors, we have no scriptural certainty about them—or rather, it were more proper to say, that, with the evidence we have of their divine authorship, our only uncertainty respected the amanuenses of these writings. As to the book of Joshua, we have several examples of the New Testament having incorporated parts of its history into its own pages.—"So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city," Josh. vi. 20. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days," Heb. xi. 30.—"And the young men that were spies went in, and

brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel," Josh. vi. 23. "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace." Heb. xi. 31. "But we have far more ancient references than this, as the following: "And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah, which is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash," Josh. xxiv. 30. "And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash," Judges ii. 9.*

17. *Judges.*] This history begins where that of Joshua ends, or takes up the narrative of Jewish affairs immediately after the death of the great captain of Israel, of which event it makes mention. The portion of history embraced in this book is made the subject of a general reference by Paul in Acts xiii. 19—21—as also in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews. "And after that he gave unto them judges," &c., Acts xiii. 20. Here Paul, by quoting history that was only recorded in the book of Judges, at the same time and in the same manner with other history only recorded in the book of Exodus, does equal honour to both

* See further—
Josh. i. 5.—Heb. xiii. 5.
ii. 1. xi. 31.
James ii. 25.
x. 12, 13.—Is. xxviii. 21.
Hab. iii. 11.
Josh. xv. 14.—Judges i. 10.
xvi. 2. i. 26.
xix. 47. xviii. 29.
xx. 8.—1 Chr. vi. 78.
xxi. 12. vi. 56.

these books, and expresses the like confidence in both. The following is a distinct allusion to a subject in this book. "And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host," Judges vii. 22. "For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian," Isaiah ix. 4. That the transactions in this book were written at a very early period, is obvious from the mention of them in the books of Samuel, and in the Psalms—as the reader may perceive by comparing Judges iv. 2; vii. 4; xi. 2; with 1 Samuel xii. 9—11—Judges ix. 53, with 2 Samuel xi. 21—and Judges v. 5, with Psalm lxviii. 8, 9. It is a striking proof of the early composition of the book of Judges, that, at the time of its being written, as appears from i. 21, the Jebusites still dwelt in Jerusalem—whereas we might infer from 2 Samuel v. 6, &c., that the total expulsion of them from that city must have taken place at the hands of David. Other vestiges of its high antiquity are to be found—and so as to harmonize with the idea that Samuel was the writer of it. For Samuel being *a* writer of scripture, we have strong evidence in Acts iii. 21—24—particularly in the latter of these two verses, where it is said that "all the prophets from Samuel have foretold of these days." That he was the writer of the book of Judges, is the confident opinion of many of our biblists. We might add, though without laying much stress on the observation, that, if the adage of Matt. ii. 23 be a

reference to Judges xiii. 5, 7,—then is there testimony in one of the gospels to the prophetical character of this book.*

18. *Ruth.*] There are certain of the books, whose canonicity reposes mainly on the undoubted fact of their having entered as constituent parts into that collection of writings termed Scripture, in the days of the New Testament; and on the homage rendered to them generally, and without any exception whatever, being specified by the founders of the latter dispensation—and that notwithstanding their earnest and repeated dissuasives against vain traditions, or "Jewish fables" of all sorts, or aught that in any shape made unwarrantable usurpation of a divine authority. We are not, however, altogether destitute of scriptural allusions to the subject-matter, of which this book is the only known record—as may be seen in the references below.† In the first verse of the first chapter of this book, the era of the judges is spoken of, as having already elapsed; and in the last verse of the last chapter, the genealogy of Ruth's family terminates with David—which intimates it to have been written in the days of this Jewish monarch; and, in all likelihood by Samuel. We may add that Matthew notices Ruth expressly in his genealogy—as if pointing to the memorial that is left of her.

* See further—
Judg. iv. 7, 15.—Ps. lxxxiii. 9. 10.
v. 5. xcvii. 5.
vi. 11.—Heb. xi. 32.
vii. 25.—Ps. lxxxiii. 11.
xi. 1.—Heb. xi. 32.
xvi. 17.—Matt. ii. 23.

† Ruth ii. 1.—Matt. i. 5.
iv. 12.—1 Chr. ii. 4
Matt. i. 3.
iv. 18.—1 Chr. ii. 4.
Matt. i. 3.

19. *Samuel—two books.*] In entering on this portion of scripture, it seems proper to remark, that, in more than one direct history of the same events, we have a duplicate or triplicate evidence —a concurrence of testimonies for the same subject-matter—besides a certain countenance and authority given by these writers to each other, who thus depone alike to one and the same history. That Samuel himself wrote the greater part of these books, is a general and confident opinion. A scriptural writer he undoubtedly must have been*—though we are unable precisely to define all the scriptures which he wrote. "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer."† We are also told of his employment as a writer in 1 Samuel x. 25.—"Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord." This last circumstance, by the way, is another scriptural indication of the practice of laying up all the writings, that were to be preserved, in a holy place; and it strengthens the security that we feel in the safe keeping of the canonical scriptures—the ενδιαθετοι—laid up in "arca ecclesiastica," εν τη κιβωτω της διαθηκης, in "armario synagogæ." Certain it is, at all events, that we have very many confirmations of these books of Samuel in other scriptures. "Behold the days come that I will cut off thine arm, and

* Acts iii. 24. † 1 Chr. xxix. 29.

the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house," 1 Samuel ii. 31. "So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord; that he might fulfil the word of the Lord, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh," 1 Kings ii. 27.—"Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations," 1 Samuel viii. 5. "I will be thy king; where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges, of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath," Hosea xiii. 10, 11. "And afterward they desired a king, and God gave unto them Saul," Acts xiii.21.—"So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shew-bread that was taken from before the Lord," 1 Samuel xxi. 6. "But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did when he was an hungered, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests," Matt. xii. 3, 4.—"And David came to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, and said, the Lord hath broken forth upon mine enemies before me, as the breach of waters. Therefore he called the name of that place, Baal-perazim," 2 Samuel v. 20. "For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act," Isaiah xxviii. 21. We can dispose of the profusion of these testimonies

in no other way, than by pointing out the places where so many of the remainder are to be found in a note below.*

20. *Kings—two Books.*] We may here observe, that still more remarkably than with the pieces which we have just quitted, we have now the benefit of a multiple testimony, both for the contents of the books on which we are entering; and so by implication, for the books themselves. We have not only the corroboration of other books, such as the two of Chronicles and Second Samuel; but we have other historical witnesses in those speakers or writers of other times, who gave sum-

* 1 Sam. i. 11.—Judges xiii. 5.
ii. 8.—Ps. cxiii. 7.
vii. 3.—Matt. iv. 10.
Luke iv. 8.
ix. 1.—1 Chr. viii. 33.
ix. 15, &c.—Acts xiii. 21.
xv. 22.—Hos. vi. 6.
Matt. ix. 13.
xii. 7.
xvi. 11.—2 Sam. vii. 8.
Ps. lxxviii. 70.
xxv. 44.—2 Sam. iii. 14, 15.
xxix. 4.—1 Chr. xii. 19.
xxxi. 13.—2 Sam. ii. 4.
2 Sam. i. 14.—Ps. cv. 15.
i. 20.—Mic. i. 10.
iii. 27.—1 Kings ii. 5.
v. i.—1 Chr. xi. 1.
v. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 71.
v. 13.—1 Chr. iii. 9.
v. 14. iii. 5.
v. 17. xi. 16.
xiv. 8.
v. 21. xiv. 12.
vi. 2. xiii. 5, 6.
vi. 6. xiii. 9.
vi. 12. xv. 25.
vi. 18. xvi. 2.
2 Sam. vii. 1.—1 Chr. xvii. 1, &c.
vii. 2—13.—1 Kings viii. 15—26.
vii. 7.—1 Chr. xvii. 6.
vii. 8 —Ps. lxxviii. 70.
vii. 12.—1 Kings ii. 1.
vii. 13. v. 5.
vi. 12.
1 Chr. xxii. 10.
vii. 14.—Heb. i. 5.
Ps. lxxxix. 30, 31, 32.
viii. 18.—1 Chr. xviii. 17.
xi. 1. xx. 1.
xii. 24 —Matt. i. 6.
1 Chr. xxii. 9.
xii. 30. xx. 2.
xix. 16.—1 Kings ii. 8.
xxi. 18.—1 Chr. xx. 4.
xxi. 19. xx. 5.
xxii. 2, &c.—Ps. xviii. 2, &c.
xxii. 50.—Rom. xv. 9.
xxiii. 8--11.—1 Chr. xi. 11.
xi. 12.
xi. 27.
xxiii. 18. xi. 20.
xxiii. 21. xi. 23.
xxiii. 25. xi. 27.
xxiv. 1. xxi. 1.

maries of the Jewish story—as the prayer of the ninth chapter of Nehemiah—several historical psalms, the 78th, the 105th, and 106th—the long speech of Stephen, in the 7th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles; and of Paul in the 13th chapter—besides the enumeration of Old Testament worthies, which he gives in the 11th chapter of his epistle to the Hebrews. It is true, that we are uncertain of the precise authors for all the precise portions of the historical books in the Old Testament. We are unable to make such a distribution as this; but we know that there was no lack either of writers or inspired men, and at opportune times, for all the scriptural compositions which have come down to us. The character indeed of these compositions rests, not on our knowledge of their secondary or human authors; but on our knowledge of their divine authorship, as attested—by the general estimation in which they were held among the Jews—by the virtual consent to this of Christ and His Apostles, who would have made it known to their disciples, if they had thought the estimation extravagant or false—by the direct attestations given to these writings in certain parts of the Old, and more especially in the New Testament—by the agreement of Jews and Christians in this matter—and by all the general arguments which we have brought to bear on the question of the canonical authority of the Jewish scriptures. As to the abundance of qualified penmen in those days, though we cannot point to the definite contributions of each or any of them—yet we know generally of their existence in the tribe of Levi, and

schools of the prophets; and, individually, even the names of some of them. We have Samuel who did, as we have already seen, write memoirs; and had the highest place and character of his day in Israel; and is ranked by succeeding writers with the greatest worthies of the nation. "Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the Lord, and he answered them," Ps. xcix. 6. "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me," Jeremiah xv. 1. "Yea and all the prophets from Samuel," Acts iii. 24. "He gave judges until Samuel the prophet," Acts xiii. 20. "Time would fail to tell of David and Samuel and the propnets," Heb. xi. 32.—And then we have Nathan the seer, and Gad the seer, both of them recorded in 1 Chron. xxix. 29, as the writers of national history.* And we have Solomon.—And we have Ezra.—And we have transcribers as well as original writers—for instance the men whom Hezekiah employed to copy out the Proverbs of Solomon.

* In 1 Chr. xxix. 29, there occur the names of no less than three Jewish historians two of which do not appear in the titles of any of our sacred books. There are a good many other instances besides —as in 2 Chr. xii. 15; xiii. 22; xx. 34; xxvi. 22, where Isaiah is specified as one of the writers of Jewish history; and xxxiii. 19, where mention is made of the written sayings of the seers. There is reference made also to what undoubtedly were other than scriptural books, as the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, as in 1 Kings xiv. 19. There is reason to believe that there were chronological and political histories, diverse from those now extant in our Bibles, yet valuable documents notwithstanding. In as far as they are referred to in scripture, they must be regarded as at least true narratives of the history for which they are quoted; and they seem to have been thus referred to in 1 Kings xv. 7. 2 Chr. xvi. 11; xxiv. 27; xxv. 26; xxvii. 7; xxviii. 26; xxxii. 32; xxxv. 27. These seem to have been more ample records than those which have been actually transmitted to us.

In short we have no want of a sufficient human agency to account for all the compositions which have come down to us. For the character of these we must examine the evidence in regard to their nature and quality *viewed as products*— which may be altogether independent of our knowledge in regard to the names of the men who were used instrumentally in the production of them. It is evident from 1 Kings viii. 8 & ix. 21, that at least certain parts of these compositions must have been written during the currency of the kingdom of Judea, or prior to the captivity by Nebuchadnezzar. The intimate connexion of these books with others in scripture, as with the Chronicles, and the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, speaks strongly for their own rank and authority as canonical writings. But we have more particular and express evidence for this in such quotations as the following. "And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions," &c. 1 Kings x. 1, &c. "The queen of the south came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon," Matt. xii. 42.—"And behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar! thus saith the Lord, Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt

upon thee," 1 Kings xiii. 1, 2. "And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burnt them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord, which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words," 2 Kings xxiii. 16.—"And Elijah the Tishbite said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word," 1 Kings xvii. 1. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit," James v. 17, 18. But far the most illustrious testimony, and by which the character of "scripture" is most distinctly and expressly given to the book of Kings is the following—"The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him," 1 Kings xix. 10, 18. "Wot ye not what the 'scripture' saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thou-

sand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal," Rom. xi. 2—4.—"And his flesh (Naaman's) came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean," 2 Kings v. 14. "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian," Luke iv. 27.—"Then Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to war; and they besieged Ahaz; but could not overcome him," 2 Kings xvi. 5. "And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up towards Jerusalem, to war against it, but could not prevail against it," Isaiah vii. 1.*

* See further—

1 Kings ii. 10.—Acts ii. 29.
xiii. 36.
ii. 11.—1 Chr. xxix. 26, 27.
ii. 12. xxix. 23.
ii. 46.—2 Chr. i. 1.
iii. 9. i. 10.
iv. 26. ix. 25.
v. 2. ii. 3.
v. 5.—1 Chr. xxii. 10.
vi. 1.—2 Chr. iii. 1.
vi. 12.—1 Chr. xxii. 10—13.
vii. 21.—2 Chr. iii. 17.
vii. 24. iv. 3.
viii. 1. v. 2.
viii. 12. vi. 1.
viii. 22. vi. 12, &c.
viii. 46. vi. 36.
Eccl. vii. 20.
1 John i. 8. 10.
viii. 62.—2 Chr. vii. 4.
viii. 64. vii. 7.
1 Kings ix. 1.—2 Chr. vii. 11.
ix. 5.—1 Chr. xxii. 10.
ix. 7.—Jer. vii. 14.
ix. 8. xxii. 8.
ix. 10.—2 Chr. viii. 1.
ix. 24. viii. 11.
x. 1. ix. 1, &c.
Luke xi. 31.
x. 12.—2 Chr. ix. 10.
xi. 26. xiii. 6.
xi. 42. ix. 30.
xi. 43.—Matt. i. 7.
xii. 1.—2 Chr. x. 1.
xii. 22. xi. 2.
xiv. 10.—2 Kings ix. 8.
xiv. 21.—2 Chr. xii. 13.
xv. 1. xiii. 1
xv. 7. xiii. 3.
xv. 8. xiv. 1.
xv. 13. xv. 16.
xv. 17. xvi. 1, &c.
xv. 18. xvi. 2.
xv 24.—Matt. i. 8.

21. I. & II. *Chronicles.*] There are frequent references, in the two last and two present books, to certain books of Kings and certain books of Chronicles; but, in many instances, there is the certainty of these not being the very books that we have in scripture, and therefore other annals which, however valuable, were not admitted into the canon. It is thought by some, however, that there is a reference to our scripture Chronicles in

1 Kings xvii. 1.—Luke iv. 25.
xvii. 9. iv. 26.
xix. 16.—2 Kings ix. 1, 2, 3. Luke iv. 27.
xxi. 21.—2 Kings ix. 8.
xxi. 23. ix. 36.
xxii. 2.—2 Chr. xviii. 2, &c.
xxii. 4.—2 Kings iii. 7.
xxii. 41.—2 Chr. xx. 31.

2 Kings i. 10—12.—Luke ix. 54.
iv. 1—8. iv. 25, 26.
vi. 16.—2 Chr. xxxii. 7.
viii. 16. xxi. 4.
viii. 24. xxii. 1.
xi. 1. xxii. 10.
xi. 4. xxiii. 1.
xii. 1. xxiv. 1.
xiv. 1. xxv. 1.
xiv. 6.—Ezek. xviii. 20.
xiv. 19.—2 Chr. xxv. 27.
xiv. 21. xxvi. 1.
xiv. 25.—Jonah i. 1.
xv. 10.—Amos vii. 9.
xv. 13.—Matt. i. 8, 9.
xv. 19.—1 Chr. v. 26, 27.
xvi. 1.—2 Chr. xxviii. 1, &c.
xvii. 33.—Zeph. i. 5.
xviii. 1.—2 Chr. xxviii. 27. xxix. 1. Matt. i. 9.
xviii. 13.—2 Chr. xxxii. 1.
xviii. 13.—Is. xxxvi. 1.

2 Kings xix. 1.—Is. xxxvii. 1.
xix. 35. xxxvii. 36.
xx. 1.—2 Chr. xxxii. 24. Is. xxxviii. 1.
xx. 11. xxxviii. 8.
xx. 12. xxxix. 1.
xx. 17.—Jer. xxvii. 22.
xxi. 1.—2 Chr. xxxiii. 1.
xxi. 4.—Jer. xxxii. 34.
xxi. xv. 4.
xxi. 18.—2 Chr. xxxiii. 20.
xxi. 26.—Matt. i. 10.
xxii. 1.—2 Chr. xxxiv. 1.
xxiii. 1. xxxiv. 29.
xxiii. 21. xxxv. 1.
xxiii. 29. xxxv. 20.
xxiii. 30. xxxvi. 1.
xxiii. 34.—Matt. i. 11.
xxiv. 10.—Dan. i. 1.
xxiv. 13.—Is. xxxix. 6.
xxiv. 15.—2 Chr. xxxvi. 10. Esther ii. 6.
xxiv. 17.—Jer. xxxvii. 1.
xxiv. 18. lii. 1.
xxv. 1. xxxix. 1. lii. 4.
xxv. 3. lii. 6.
xxv. 13. xxvii. 22.
xxv. 17. lii. 21.
xxv. 22. xl. 5.
xxv. 23. xl. 7, &c.
xxv. 26. xli. 1, 2.

Neh. xii. 23. It is most likely that there may have been copious annals of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, which have now perished. There was, at the Jewish court, the special office of a recorder —as appears from 2 Samuel viii. 16; 1 Kings iv. 3; 2 Kings xviii. 18, and 1 Chron. xviii. 15. Amid the uncertainties which obtain, as to the precise writers of the Chronicles in the Bible, it may be stated, as one argument for the common opinion of Ezra having written the greater part of them—that the last verses of the second book of Chronicles and the first verses of the book of Ezra are identical. Still parts of the compilation must have been written during the subsistence of the Jewish kingdom—as is obvious from 2 Chron. v. 9; viii. 8; x. 19, and xxi. 10. That they had the canonical rank of scriptures, and were admitted to that ark in the temple from which the Apocrypha were excluded, is argued—from the use made of them in the genealogies of Matthew and Luke—from the general reasons already adduced, in which they fully participate—and from the multitude of scriptural references which are made to them, of which we now offer a few specimens. "Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite," 1 Chron xxi. 18. "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite," 2 Chron. iii. 1.—"Josiah

came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died: and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah," 2 Chron. xxxv. 22—24. "In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon," Zech. xii. 11.—"And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy," 2 Chr. xxxvi. 15, 16. "From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even unto this day, (that is the three and twentieth year,) the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened. And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear," Jer. xxv. 3, 4. "I have also sent unto you all the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me," Jer. xxxv. 15.—"To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbaths to fulfil threescore and ten years," 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21. "These nations shall serve the

king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord," Jer. xxv. 11, 12. "For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place," Jer. xxix. 10. It is obvious that the prophets, who lived prior to the captivity must supply a good many references to these historical books; and, in regard to the likely authors of them, let it be observed once more—that Samuel and some of the prophets in Acts iii. 24, must have had a hand in their composition. Certain it is of Samuel, that no prophetical book, in the common sense of that term, has been transmitted by him; and where then can he have spoken of the days of the New Testament? Surely whatever is referred to as spoken by one so ancient, must have been written by him also—else it would have perished from the memory of the nation. They who were charged by the Saviour as slow in heart, for not believing all that the prophets had spoken, were culpable in this—that they had not attended to that which was written; and, to repair this defect, did our Saviour expound all which was "written" in Moses, and the Psalms, and the Prophets concerning himself. In like manner that which was spoken by Joel (Acts ii. 16) was that which was written by him. That which was spoken of in the prophets (Acts xiii. 40) was that which was written of in them. And Samuel and the prophets that follow after, as many as had

spoken, were just as many as had written—proving that Samuel and other inspired men, though we cannot point to the writings severally of each, have, somewhere or other, had their share in the writings of the Old Testament.*

22. *Ezra and Nehemiah.*†] These two books anciently composed one volume. Ezra was a ready scribe in the law of Moses; and, by the universal consent of antiquity, acted the part of an inspired editor of all the Jewish scriptures that

* See further—
1 Chr. i. 24.—Luke iii. 36.
ii. 4.—Matt. i. 3.
ii. 9. i. 3.
iii. 16, 17. i. 11, 12.
v. 2.—Micah v. 2.
Matt. ii. 6.
vi. 14.—Neh. xi. 11.
xvi. 8.—Ps. cv. 1, &c.
xvi. 22. cv. 15.
xvi. 23. xcvi. 1.
xvi. 34. cvi. 1.
cvii. 1.
cxviii. 1.
cxxxvi. 1.
xviii. 8.—2 Chr. iv. 15.
xxi. 30. i. 3.
xxiii. 6. viii. 14.
xxix. 25.
xxiii. 13.—Heb. v. 4.
xxviii. 4.—Ps. lxxviii. 68.
xxviii. 6.—2 Chr. i. 9.
xxix. 11.—Matt. vi. 13.
1 Tim. i. 17.
Rev. v. 13.
xxix. 15.—Ps. xxxix. 12.
Heb. xi. 13.
1 Pet. ii. 11.
Ps. xc. 9.
xxix. 25.—2 Chr. i. 12.
1 Chr. xxix. 25.—Eccl. ii. 9.
2 Chr. i. 12. ii. 9.
iii. 14.—Matt. xxvii. 51.
iii. 15.—Jer. lii. 21.
v. 13.—Ps. cxxxvi.
vi. 16. cxxxii. 12.
vi. 18.—Is. lxvi. 1.
Acts vii. 49.
xvii. 24.
vi. 32.—John xii. 20.
Acts viii. 27.
vi. 36.—Prov. xx. 29.
Eccl. vii. 20.
James iii. 2.
1 John i. 8.
vi. 41.—Ps. cxxxii. 8, 9.
vii. 21.—Jer. xxii. 8, 9.
ix. 1.—Matt. xii. 42.
Luke xi. 31.
xx. 20.—Is. vii. 9.
xxi. 7.—Ps. cxxxii. 11.
xxxii. 1, &c.—Is. xxxvi. 1, &c.
xxxii. 8.—Jer. xvii. 5.
xxxii. 24.—Is. xxxviii. 1.
xxxiii. 7.—Ps. cxxxii. 14.
xxxvi. 22.—Ezra i. 1.
Jer. xxv. 12, 13.
xxix. 10.

† We might remark, in passing, a monumental evidence for the books both of Ezra and Daniel, in the tinge or mixture of the Chaldaic with the Hebrew in their composition.

were extant in his time. That he was the author of the book of Ezra, is collected from the frequent occurrence of his name in the first person. "God hath extended mercy unto me before the king; and I was strengthened," Ezra vii. 27, 28. "And at the evening sacrifice, I arose up from my heaviness; and I fell upon my knees," Ezra ix. 5. The prayer is in the first person; and, when ended, the narrative is resumed of Ezra in the third person (Ezra x. 1). He uses the first person also in Ezra viii. 15, &c. The canonical authority of this book is argued from its unexcepted place in all the ancient catalogues—from the implication of it with the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah—and from the illustration which it sheds on the prophecies of both. Compare particularly the first chapter of Haggai, and the third and fourth of Zechariah with the fifth chapter of Ezra. And there are other scriptural references besides in favour both of this book and that of Nehemiah. "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is at Judah," Ezra i. 2. "That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid," Is. xliv. 28. "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed; to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him," Is. xlv. 1. "I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways," Isaiah xlv. 13.—"Then the prophets, Haggai the

prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them," Ezra v. 1. "In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord, by Haggai the prophet, unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying," Haggai i. 1. "In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah the son of Barachiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying," Zech. i. 1.*

23. *Esther.*] This book is by many ascribed to Mordecai; and he must certainly have been the original writer of, at least, some of its contents. See Esther ix. 20, 27. Its being said that he "wrote these things," may possibly be an ascription of the whole book, or at least the greater part of it, to him. We have no very satisfactory or decisive references to this book from other parts of scripture. Its canonical authority rests on the circumstance, of its having been canonized by the Jews; and by many of the Christian fathers, as well as the council of Laodicea. We cannot

* See further—
Ezra i. 1.—Jer. xxv. 12. xxix. 10.
ii. 1.—Neh. vii. 6.
ii. 2. vii. 7.
ii. 6. vii. 11.
ii. 10. vii. 15.
ii. 18 vii. 24.
ii. 20. vii. 25.
ii. 24. vii. 28.
Ezra ii. 40.—Neh. vii. 43.
ii. 55. vii. 57.
ii. 57. vii. 59.
iii. 2.—Hag. i. 1. Matt. i. 12. Luke iii. 27.
vii. 14.—Esther i. 14.
Neh. ix. 29.—Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12.

assign for it much of that particular evidence, which we have been employed in accumulating, for the benefit of all the books which go before it. But it shares with them in the general arguments adduced at the beginning of this chapter—to which might be added, the certain chaste and simple dignity, which is characteristic of all the canonical writings; and by which they stand remarkably contrasted with the legendary and untasteful style that often breaks forth in the writings, even of the best of the Apocryphists.

24. *Job.*] We now enter on the books called poetical—all of which, along with certain others, are ranked by the Jews among the Hagiographa. Should any be led by this to imagine a lower degree of inspiration for these books—then, to countervail this injury, it is certain that, in favour of most of them, we have the greatest amount of scriptural, which, we repute, is the greatest amount of the best sort of evidence. The depositions of the New Testament to the Psalms, and the prophecies of Daniel, are greatly more than a counterpoise to any mischief which might be apprehended for certain of the Old Testament scriptures, from the fanciful distinctions of the later Hebrews—a distinction, after all, that proceeds more on some imaginary difference in the mode of inspiration, than on any difference in the qualities of the products—the properties of absolute authority and trueness being ascribed, without exception, by the Jews, to one and all of their scriptures. And we are not to conceive, because the interval between Esther and Isaiah in our

Bible is filled up by the books called poetical, that these comprise all the sacred poetry to be found in the Old Testament. The fifteenth chapter of Exodus—the song of Moses in Deuteronomy, and of Deborah and Hannah in the books of Judges and Samuel—the lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan, with those other effusions of his in the seventh chapter of 2 Samuel, and the sixteenth of 1 Chronicles—beside the many enrapt compositions of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Jonah, Habakkuk, and others—are all in the strain and spirit of highest poetry. That such a mode of composition is not inconsistent with the purposes of revelation, is obvious from the repeated sanctions given in scripture both to music and poetry—as in the service of the temple—and even in the New Testament, where we are recommended to the use of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; and thus to make melody in our hearts to the Lord. The book of Job, however, is the first of those books, in the order of our Bible, to the whole of which the designation of poetical is given. His character as an inspired man seems to be decisively attested, both by Ezekiel and James—particularly the former, when he ranks him with the patriarch Noah and the prophet Daniel. "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God," Ezekiel xiv. 14, and again in verse 20. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord," James v. 11—a testimony which seems to establish the literal truth of the history, in opposi-

tion to those who conceive it to be a mere dramatic representation. But whatever uncertainties may attach to the man, it is enough for our purpose, that we have evidence for the book. And, beside the exscriptural evidence, which it shares in equally with all the others, there is enough to establish the canonical authority of the book of Job, in the testimonies of the sacred writers. Of these, the one we should single out as the most distinct and decisive, is that by Paul in the first epistle to the Corinthians. "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness," Job v. 13. "For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness," 1 Cor. iii. 19. St. Paul tells us of this passage that "it is written"—or, which is tantamount to this, that, "we have it in scripture"—thus making the book of Job from which the quotation is taken, part and parcel of scripture.*

* See further—

Job i. 7.—1 Pet. 5. 8.
i. 21.—Eccl. v. 15.
1 Tim. vi. 7.
iii. 3.—Jer. xx. 14.
iv. 8.—Prov. xxii. 8.
Hos. x. 13.
iv. 9.—Is. xxx. 33.
v. 12.—Ps. xxxiii. 10.
v. 14.—Deut. xxviii. 29.
v. 16.—Ps. cvii. 42.
v. 17.—Prov. iii. 12.
Heb. xii. 5.
v. 18.—1 Sam. ii. 6.
Hos. vi. 1.
vi. 4.—Ps. xxxviii. 2.
vii. 17.—Ps. viii. 4.
cxliv. 3.
viii. 9.—1 Chr. xxix. 15.
Ps. cxliv. 4.
viii. 13.—Prov. x. 28.
Job ix. 9.—Amos v. 8.
xiii. 26.—Ps. xxv. 7.
xiv. 4. li. 5.
xiv. 16. cxxxix. 2, 3.
xv. 8.—Rom. xi. 34.
xv. 35.—Ps. vii. 14.
Is. lix. 4.
xix. 19.—Ps. xli. 9.
lv. 13, 14.
xix. 29.—Rom. xiii. 4.
xxi.—Ps. lxxiv.
xxi. 5.—Mic. vii. 16.
xxi. 30.—Prov. xvi. 4.
xxii. 19.—Ps. cvii. 42.
xxii. 29.—James iv. 10.
1 Pet. v. 6.
xxvi. 6.—Prov. xv. 11.
xxvii. 8.—Matt. xvi. 26.
xxvii. 15.—Ps. lxxviii. 64.
xxviii. 15.—Prov. iii. 13, 14.
viii. 10, 11, 19.

25. *Psalms.*] The fulness of the evidence becomes now oppressive to him who has undertaken the office, at once to exhibit and condense it. Never were the existence, and the contents, and even in some instances the order and arrangement of any ancient book more decisively established by the testimony of succeeding books, than is this collection of sacred poems by the various writers of the New Testament—and that by numerous undoubted citations often accompanied with an express statement, both of the work from whence they have been taken, and of the author of the work. One cannot doubt, from the frequent use of these compositions in the service of the temple, of the frequent multiplication of their copies (to be found, therefore in many hands) from the autograph that was deposited there. We have already, in § 9, given a few instances of the recognition of the Psalms by Christ and His Apostles; but we crave the indulgence of our readers, if both in this book and in that of Isaiah, we shall present a more copious collection of these, than some perhaps may have the patience to examine. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against

Job xxviii. 15.—Prov. xvi. 16.
xxviii. 28.—Ps. cxi. 10.
Prov. i. 7, & ix. 10
xxx. 9.—Ps. lxix. 12.
xxx. 25. xxxv. 13.
xxxi. 6.—Prov. v. 21.
xxxiii. 20.—Ps. cvii. 18.
xxxv. 7. xvi. 2.
Job xxxv. 7.—Rom. xi. 35.
xxxvi. 11, 12.—Is. i. 19, 20.
xxxviii. 4.—Ps. civ. 5.
xxxviii. 10.—Prov. viii. 29
xxxviii. 41.—Ps. cxlvii. 9.
Matt. vi. 26.
xxxix. 30. xxiv. 28.
Luke xvii. 37

His Anointed," Psalm ii. 1, 2. "Who by the mouth of Thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord, and against his Christ," Acts iv. 25, 26.—"Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," Psalm ii. 7, 8. "As it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee," Acts xiii. 33, Heb. i. 5.—"Their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue," Psalm v. 9. "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit," Rom. iii. 13. —"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength," Psalm viii. 2. "And Jesus saith unto them, Yea have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise," Matt. xxi. 16.—"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hand," Psalm viii. 4, 5, 6. "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands," Heb. ii. 6, 7.—"Thou hast put all things under his feet,"

Psalm viii. 6. "For he hath put all things under his feet," 1 Cor. xv. 27. "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet," Heb. ii. 8.—"His mouth is full of cursing and deceit," Psalm x. 7. "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness," Romans iii. 14.—"They are all gone aside; they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Psalm xiv. 3. "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one," Rom. iii. 12.—"I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope: For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption," &c. Psalm xvi. 8—10, &c. "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover, also my flesh shall rest in hope; because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," &c. Acts ii. 25—27, &c.—"Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name," Ps. xviii. 49. "As it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name," Rom. xv. 9.—"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture," Ps. xxii. 18. "That the scripture might be fulfilled which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my

vesture they did cast lots," John xix. 24.—"I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee," Ps. xxii. 22. "Saying (Jesus), I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee," Heb. ii. 12.—"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile," Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. "Even as David also describeth—saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin," Rom. iv. 6—8.—"There is no fear of God before their eyes," Ps. xxxvi. 1. "It is written, There is no fear of God before their eyes," Rom. iii. 10, 18.—"Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God," Ps. xl. 6—8. "Wherefore, he saith (Christ), Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared for me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God," Heb. x. 5—7.—"Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me," Ps. xli. 9. "That the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me," John xiii. 18.—Yea, for thy sake

are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter," Ps. xliv. 22. "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter," Rom. viii. 36.—"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," Ps. xlv. 6, 7. "He (God) saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," Heb. i. 8, 9. —"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men," Ps. lxviii. 18. "Wherefore he (Christ) saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men," Eph. iv. 8.— "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me," Ps. lxix. 9. "And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," John ii. 17. "As it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me," Rom. xv. 3.—"In my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink," Ps. lxix. 21. "Jesus, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst; and they filled a sponge with vinegar," John xix. 28, 29.—"Let their table become a snare before them; and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.

Let their eyes be darkened that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake," Ps. lxix. 22, 23. "And David saith, Let their table be made a snare and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them: Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway," Rom. xi. 9, 10.—"Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents," Ps. lxix. 25. "For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein," Acts i. 20.—"I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old," Ps. lxxviii. 2. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world," Matt. xiii. 35.—"I have said, Ye are gods," Ps. lxxxii. 6. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" John x. 34.—"For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," Ps. xci. 11, 12. "It is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone," Matt. iv. 6. See also Luke iv. 10, 11.—"The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man that they are vanity," Ps. xciv. 11. "It is written, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain," 1 Cor. iii. 20.—"To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation

in the wilderness, When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work," &c. Ps. xcv. 7—9, &c. "As the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years," &c. Heb. iii. 7—9, &c. See also Heb. iv. 7.—"Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end," Ps. cii. 25—27. "He (God) saith, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail," Heb. i. 10—12.—Who maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flaming fire," Ps. civ. 4. "And of the angels he (God) saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire," Heb. i. 7.—"They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause," Ps. cix. 3. "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause," John xv. 25.—"Let another take his office," Ps. cix. 8. "For it is written in the book of Psalms, His bishopric let another take,"

Acts i. 20.—"The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool," Ps. cx. 1. "He (Christ) saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord? saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool," Matt. xxii. 43, 44. "For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool," Mark xii. 36. "And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, the Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool," Luke xx. 42, 43. See also Heb. i. 13.—"Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek," Psalms cx. 4. "As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec," Heb. v. 6. "For He testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec," Heb. vii 17.—"He hath dispersed; he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever." Ps. cxii. 9. "As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth for ever," 2 Cor. ix. 9.—"I believed, therefore have I spoken," Ps. cxvi. 10. "According as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken," 2 Cor. iv. 13.—"O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people," Ps. cxvii. 1. "It is written, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him all ye people," Rom. xv. 11.—"The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing;

it is marvellous in our eyes," Ps. cxviii. 22, 23. "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner; this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes," Matth. xxi. 42. See also Mark xii. 10, 11; Luke xx. 17.—"The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne," Ps. cxxxii. 11. "Therefore (David) being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne," Acts ii. 30.—"Adder's poison is under their lips," Psal. cxl. 3. "It is written, The poison of asps is under their lips," Rom. iii. 13.*

* See further—
Ps. i. 3.—Jer. xvii. 8.
ii. 9.—Rev. ii. 27.
xii. 5.
vi. 8.—Matt. vii. 23.
Luke xiii. 27.
xi. 4.—Hab. ii. 20.
xii. 6.—Prov. xxx. 5.
xv. 2. —Is. xxxiii. 15.
xv. 5.—Ezek. xviii. 8.
xvi. 5.—Lam. iii. 24.
xvi. 10.—Acts xiii. 35.
xix. 4.—Rom. x. 18.
xxii. 1.—Matt. xxvii. 46.
Mark xv. 34.
xxii. 7.—Matt. xxvii. 39.
xxii. 16. xxvii. 35.
Mark xv. 24.
Luke xxiii. 33.
John xix. 23, 37.
xxii. 18.—Matt. xxvii. 35.
Mark xv. 24.
Luke xxiii. 34.
Ps. xxii. 18.—John xix. 23, 24,
xxiv. 1.—1 Cor. x. 26, 28.
xxiv. 4.—Is. xxxiii. 15, 16
xxv. 2.—Rom. x. 11.
xxviii. 3.—Jer. ix. 8.
xxxi. 5.—Luke xxiii. 46.
xxxi. 19.—Is. lxiv. 4.
1 Cor. ii. 9.
xxxii. 5.—1 John i. 9.
xxxiii. 11.—Prov. xix. 21.
xxxiii. 18.—1 Pet. iii. 12.
xxxiv. 12. iii. 10.
xxxiv. 15. iii. 12.
xxxv. 5.—Hos. xiii. 3.
xxxvii. 1.—Prov. xxiv. 1, 19.
xxxvii. 5. xvi. 3.
1 Pet. v. 7.
xxxvii. 11.—Matt. v. 5.
xxxix. 12.—1 Chr. xxix. 15.
Heb. xi. 13.
xl. 6.—Is. i. 11.
xlix. 4.—Matt. xiii. 35.
liii. 1.—Rom. iii. 12.

26. *Proverbs.*] In the direct history of Solomon, we read both of his Proverbs and of his Songs. (1 Kings iv. 32). And we are further informed by certain proverbs in this collection, that they were copied out by the men of Hezekiah. (Prov. xxv. 1). That Solomon their author received preternatural communications from heaven, is affirmed more than once in the history of his life. (1 Kings iii. 5; ix. 2). His wisdom is adverted to by our Saviour in Matt. xii. 42,—when he spake of the queen of Sheba's visit to him. That they were mainly, if not universally, the productions of Solomon, is evident, not from their extrinsic, but, what is much stronger, their incorporated title in the first verse of the first chapter—that kind of title, which is denominated *εγγραφος*, and of which we have many examples, in the books both of the Old and New Testament. When any of the sayings in this book of Proverbs

Ps. lv. 22.—1 Pet. v. 7.
lxix. 21.—Matt. xxvii. 48.
Mark xv. 23.
John xix. 29.
lxxviii. 15.—1 Cor. x. 4.
lxxviii. 24.—John vi. 31.
lxxix. 6.—Jer. x. 25.
lxxxi. 12.—Acts xiv. 16.
lxxxix. 20. xiii. 22.
lxxxix. 36.—Luke i. 33.
John xii. 34.
xc. 4.—2 Pet. iii. 8.
xciv. 9.—Prov. xx. 12.
xcvii. 7.—Heb. i. 6.
xcviii. 2.—Is. lii. 10.
cv. 1.—1 Chr. xvi. 8.
Is. xii. 4.
cv. 9.—Luke i. 73.
cvii. 35.—Is. xli. 18

Ps. cx. 1.—Acts ii. 34.
1 Cor. xv. 25.
cxi. 10.—Prov. i. 7.
ix. 10.
cxiii. 3.—Mal. i. 11.
cxiii. 7.—1 Sam. ii. 8.
cxviii. 6.—Heb. xiii. 6.
cxviii. 22.—Acts iv. 11.
1 Pet. ii. 4.
cxviii. 26.—Matt. xxi. 9.
cxix. 21.—Heb. xi. 13.
cxix. 139.—John ii. 17.
cxxxii. 8.—2 Chr. vi. 41.
cxxxii. 11.—Luke i. 69.
cxxxix. 12.—Heb. iv. 13.
cxliv. 1.—2 Sam. xxii. 35.
cxliv. 2. xxii. 2, 3.
cxliv. 3.—Heb. ii. 6.

are alleged in the New Testament, it is not most assuredly according to the manner in which Christ or His apostles would quote a merely human composition—but with the obvious respect due to canonical scriptures. The following are a few instances.—"For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood," Prov. i. 16. "Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood," Isaiah lix. 7. "It is written, their feet are swift to shed blood," Rom. iii. 15.—"My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth," Prov. iii. 11, 12. "And ye have forgotten the exhortation, which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," Heb. xii. 5, 6.—"Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly," Prov. iii. 34. "Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble," James iv. 6.—"Love covereth all sins," Prov. x. 12. "Charity shall cover the multitude of sins," 1 Peter iv. 8. The following is very distinct and decisive.—"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink. For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee," Prov. xxv. 21, 22. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is

mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head," Rom. xii. 19, 20.—"As a dog returneth to his vomit; so a fool returneth to his folly," Prov. xxvi. 11. "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and, The sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire," 2 Peter ii. 22.*

27. *Ecclesiastes.*] In regard to the human

* See further—

Prov. i. 24.—Is. lxv. 12.
lxvi. 4.
Jer. vii. 13.
i. 28.—Is. i. 15.
Jer. xi. 11.
xiv. 12.
Mic. iii. 4.
Zech. vii. 13.
ii. 4.—Matt. xiii. 44.
ii. 6.—James i. 5.
iii. 7.—Rom. xii. 16.
iii. 9.—Mal. iii. 10.
iii. 12.—Rev. iii. 19.
iii. 34.—1 Pet. v. 5.
vi. 18.—Rom. iii. 15.
vi. 25.—Matt. v. 28.
ix. 8. vii. 6.
xi. 25.—1 Cor. ix. 8, 9, 10.
xii. 4. xi. 7.
xv. 8.—Is. i. 11.
Jer. vi. 20.
vii. 22.
Amos v. 22.
xv. 16.—1 Tim. vi. 6.
xv. 24.—Phil. iii. 20.
Col. iii. 1, 2.
xvii. 13.—Rom. xii. 17.
1 Thess. v. 15.
1 Pet. iii. 9.
xvii. 15.—Is. v. 23.
Prov. xvii. 27.—James i. 19.
xix. 10.—Eccl. x. 6, 7.
xix. 17.—Matt. x. 42.
xxv. 40.
2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.
xx. 9.—1 John i. 8.
xx. 20.—Matt. xv. 4.
Mark vii. 10.
xx. 22.—Rom. 12. 17.
1 Thess. v. 15.
1 Pet. iii. 9.
xxi. 3.—Mic. vi. 7, 8.
xxi. 22.—Eccl. ix. 14, &c.
xxii. 1. vii. 1.
xxii. 8.—Hos. x. 13.
xxii. 9.—2 Cor. ix. 6.
xxiii. 29.—Is. v. 11.
xxv. 7.—Luke xiv. 10.
xxv. 9.—Matt. v. 25.
xviii. 15.
xxvii. 1.—James iv. 13, &c.
xxvii. 20.—Eccl. i. 8.
xxviii. 13.—1 John i. 9, 10.
xxviii. 20.—1 Tim. vi. 9.
xxix. 23.—Matt. xxiii. 12.
Luke xiv. 11.
xxx. 4.—John iii. 13
Isaiah xl. 12, &c.
xxx. 6.—Rev. xxii. 18, 19.
xxx. 8.—Matt. vi. 11.

authorship of this book, though not ascribed to Solomon by name, it is by undoubted designation —and that, within the limits of the work itself, which begins with the announcement of its own parentage, as "The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem." And not by designation only is it fastened upon Solomon—but by description also, applicable to him, and not so applicable to any other of whom we know.—"And moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs."* And that he was the author of the words as well as of the thoughts—the writer as well as the conceiver of this book—seems very obvious from chap. xii. 10. This does not exclude, however, the idea of an amanuensis, which detracts not in the least from the full authorship—any more than it does from the authorship of Paul, that he did not write manually every word of his epistles.† We have the general consent both of Jews and Christians for the canonical authority of this book; and though we can allege no express quotation from it in the other scriptures—yet such are the resemblances, if not the references, which might be found in it, that, from within the work itself, we can offer some things to confirm, while there is nothing to discredit the external testi-

* Eccl. xii. 9. See of his wisdom and works in the direct history. 1 Kings iii. 12; iv. 29, 32; x. 1, &c.

† He seems to have written with his own hand the whole epistle to the Galatians—Gal. vi. 11—but not so the Romans—Rom. xvi. 22—though he assumes and rightly the sole authorship of the epistle. See Rom. i. 1, &c; ix. 1, &c.; x. 1, &c.; xv. 14, 24.

mony. The following is the only instance that we shall produce in the text.—"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil," Eccl. xii. 14. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," 2 Cor. v. 10. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel," Rom. ii. 16.*

28. *Song of Solomon.*] We read of the songs of Solomon in 1 Kings iv. 32. The internal evidence against the canonical authority of this book has been regarded by many to be so strong, as to outweigh the external testimony which might be adduced in its favour. But, if the discredit grounded on the nature of its contents can be removed, this should restore to their full and proper force the outward credentials—consisting of the exscriptural testimonies; and of all those general arguments that might be founded on the undoubted place, which, along with the other books, it has ever held in the canon of the Old Testament. The great repugnance that is felt towards the acknowledgment of its scriptural rank, arises from the imagery employed in it, which

* See further—
Eccl. i. 8.—Rom. viii. 20, 22.
v. 2.—Matt. vi. 7.
v. 15.—1 Tim. vi. 7.
vii. 3.—2 Cor. vii. 10, 11.
vii. 20.—1 John i. 8.
x. 20.—Rom. xiii. 2.
Eccl. xi. 1.—Matt. x. 42.
2 Cor. ix. 9, 10.
xi. 5.—John iii. 8.
xi. 9.—1 Cor. iv. 5.
2 Cor. v. 10.
xii. 11.—John x. 11, 14.
xii. 14.—Rom. xiv. 10.

appears to many incongruous with those mutual regards between Christ and his church, that form, in the apprehension of the orthodox, the great subject of this work. But the very same imagery, it should be recollected, is employed, and for the very same purpose, by the most undoubted of our scriptural writers, and in the first and foremost of our scriptural books. To present one example out of those which occur in the Old Testament, we have the prophet Isaiah saying, "Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved, touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill," Isaiah v. 1, &c. See further, Isaiah lxi. 10, and lxii. 5. Jer. ii. 2. Ezek. xvi. 8. Hosea ii. 19, 20. Matt. ix. 15; xxii. 2, &c.; xxv. 1, &c. John iii. 29. But even the New Testament, more didactic and less poetical, as it is conceived to be, abundantly exemplifies the style and form of representation that have been so much objected to, in this part of scripture. The affection of Christ for the church, is, doctrinally and without a figure, set forth in Acts xx. 28—where the measure of his love may be estimated by the price which he gave for it, having "purchased it with his own blood." This forms the commencement of a new relation, we are told in Rom. vii. 4, between the sinner who is redeemed and the Saviour who has thus redeemed him. Raised by Him from death, we are married to Christ, "that we should bring forth fruit unto God." The image is repeated by the apostle in his second epistle to the Corinthians, xi. 2. "I have espoused you to one husband,

that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." And the preparation for our full enjoyment of Him in heaven, is our investiture here in all the graces of moral and spiritual excellence; and accordingly, the great work of Jesus Christ as the Lord our strength and our sanctifier, is to make us meet for that inheritance, whereof the spirit is said to be the earnest.* This is followed up by a more full development of the image in Eph. v. 25—32—which imagery is not only sustained by Paul throughout the preparation for union with Christ here; but is employed by John, when he sets forth the completion of it in heaven—where a glorious and immortal festival awaits all those "who are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb."† Our business here is to be diligent, that we may be found without spot and blameless in the great day of reckoning. This we are enabled to prosecute through Christ helping us, who prepares His disciples for Himself, "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." When this is accomplished, He may say, in the language of the Canticles, "Thou art fair, there is no spot in thee," Song iv. 7. It is thus that we have scriptural authority, if not for the positive confirmation of the title of this work to a place in the canon, at least for the removal of the objections against it. We admit that it has not much more of affirmative evidence to rest upon, than the historical fact of its reception by the Jewish and Christian churches—coupled, however, with the uniform testimony of Christ and his apostles

* Eph. i. 14; iv. 30. † Rev. xix. 7—9; xx. 1, 2.

on the side of "scripture," whereof this work formed part and parcel in their time. With the exception, perhaps, of one passage in the New Testament, the second book of Kings would have scarcely had any other than the same grounds to rest upon—yet in that passage it is at once quoted as scripture, and thus has its scriptural place and authority conclusively stamped upon it. The Song of Solomon has not the benefit of any reference so distinct and peculiar as this; but the strong circumstance—both in its favour, and in that of all other books which held occupancy in the Hebrew scriptures of that day, is—that Christ and His apostles, in their repeated notices of the whole collection, under this their received and understood title, never complains of any unlicensed intrusion, made by any work among the sacred writings of their countrymen. Yet neither are we altogether destitute of scriptural evidence on this subject, as we have made out to a certain extent already, and of which we offer a few additional examples below.* By the general consent of the Jewish and Christian churches, this work has a place in the canon: And there are not wanting examples, in the history of the church, of those pure in heart, those lofty and accomplished disciples in the school of spiritual and experimental religion, as St. Bernard and Thomas Aquinas, who have rejoiced in the preciousness of this scripture, and inhaled the very

* Cant. i. 4.—John vi. 44. iv. 7.—Eph. v. 27. | Cant. v. 1.—Rev. iii. 20. v. 2.—Rev. iii. 20.

Many more similar quotations might be given—but these will account for the fact, why, not only our most spiritual men, but those who are best acquainted with scripture in general, are most reconciled and most attached to the Song of Solomon in particular.

atmosphere of heaven, without one taint of the base or the unholy, while they luxuriated over its pages. "Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled," Titus i. 15. For the interesting subject of the relation, in which the external stands to the internal evidence, on the question of the canon or the inspiration of any book, we would refer our readers to a succeeding chapter.

29. Before entering, in detail, on the prophetic books—it may be right to exhibit a few of the scriptural testimonies for the existence of such works in the general, and the respect in which they were held. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets," Matt. ii. 23. "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write," John i. 45—thus ascribing to the prophets, an authority co-ordinate with that of Moses. "As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began," Luke i. 70. "All things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished," Luke xviii. 31. "Which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began," Acts iii. 21. "Yea, and all the prophets have likewise foretold of these days," Acts iii. 24. "Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures," Rom. i. 2. "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets," Heb. i. 1. We forbear to multiply instances in proof of a thing so palpable, as that there existed a collection of prophetical writ-

ings in the days of our Saviour, in favour of which we have the joint testimony both of Jews and Christians, accompanied by the frequent appeals both of Christ and his apostles.

30. *Isaiah.*] This most illustrious of the Old Testament prophets seems to have been honoured in the days of our Saviour, with a separate volume for his own compositions. See Luke iv. 17. Their human authorship is clearly assigned to him —and that, not by an external, but by an incorporated title. Isaiah i. 1. See also ii. 1; xiii. 1; xx. 2; xxx. 8, &c. &c. He speaks throughout repeatedly in his own person, as in vi. 1, which passage decides also the chronology of this prophet—a point, however, decisively established by direct scriptural history, and more particularly of the reign of Hezekiah in the second book of Kings and second book of Chronicles. The great difficulty lies, not in finding, but in selecting the testimonies, which are so profusely scattered over the Bible in favour of this prophet. "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and should have been like unto Gomorrah," Isaiah i. 9. "And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha," Romans ix. 29. —"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it," &c. Isaiah ii. 2, &c. "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the

top of the mountains; and people shall flow unto it," Micah iv. 1, &c.—"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple," Isaiah vi. 1. "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him," John xii. 41.—"And he said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed," Isaiah vi. 9, 10. "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive. For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their ears they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them," Matt. xiii. 14, 15. See also John xii. 39, 40. Acts xxviii. 25, 26. Rom. xi. 8. —"Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," Isaiah vii. 14. "All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel," Matt. i. 22, 23.—"He shall be for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence," Isaiah viii. 14. "As it is written, Behold I lay

in Zion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence," Rom. ix. 33.—"The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined," Isaiah ix. 1, 2. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Esaias, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light: and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up," Matt. iv. 14—16.—"For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return," Isaiah x. 22. "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved," Rom. ix. 27.—"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek," Isaiah xi. 10. "Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust," Rom. xv. 12.—"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die," Isaiah xxii. 13. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," 1 Cor. xv. 32.—"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open," Isaiah xxii. 22. "These things saith he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and

shutteth, and no man openeth," Rev. iii. 7.—"Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare," Isaiah xxiv. 17, 18. "Fear, and the pit, and the snare, shall be upon thee, O inhabitant of Moab, saith the Lord. He that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth up out of the pit, shall be taken in the snare," Jer. xlviii. 43, 44.—"He will swallow up death in victory," Isaiah xxv. 8. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory," 1 Cor. xv. 54.—"For with stammering lips, and another tongue, will he speak to this people, yet they would not hear," Isaiah xxviii. 11, 12. "In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord," 1 Cor. xiv. 21.—"Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste," Isaiah xxviii. 16. "As it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed," Rom. ix. 33. See also 1 Peter ii. 6, 7, 8.*—"Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and

* It is remarkable of this quotation that it is introduced by Paul with the words "It is written," and by Peter with the words "It is contained in scripture"—marking the equivalency of the two phrases.

with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men," Isaiah xxix. 13. "Well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," Matt. xv. 7—9. See also Mark vii. 6, 7.—"For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid," Isaiah xxix. 14. "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent," 1 Cor. i. 19.—"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together," Isaiah xl. 3—5. "As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God," Luke iii. 4—6. See also Matt. iii. 3. Mark i. 2, 3. John i. 23.—"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have

put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth," Isaiah xlii. 1—3. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets," &c., Matt. xii. 17—19.—"Unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear," Isaiah xlv. 23. "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, every tongue should confess," Phil. ii. 10, 11.—"In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee," Isaiah xlix. 8. "For he (God) saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee," 2 Cor. vi. 2.—"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth," Isaiah lii. 7. "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things," Rom. x. 15. See also Nahum i. 15. —"That which had not been told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider," Isaiah lii. 15. "As it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see; and

they that have not heard shall understand," Rom xv. 21.—"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Isaiah liii. 1. "That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" John xii. 38. See also Rom. x. 16.—"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," Isaiah liii. 4. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," Matt. viii. 17. —"And he was numbered with the transgressors," Isaiah liii. 12. "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors," Mark xv. 28. See also Luke xxii. 37. —"Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord," Isaiah liv. 1. "For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband," Gal. iv. 27.—"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord," Isaiah liv. 13. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God," John vi. 45.—"I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David," Isaiah lv. 3. "He said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David," Acts xiii. 34.—"Mine house shall be called An house of prayer for all people," Isaiah

lvi. 7. "Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer?" Mark xi. 17. See also Matt. xxi. 13. Luke xix. 46.—"Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not," Isaiah lix. 7, 8. "Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known," Rom. iii. 15—17. See also Prov. i. 16.—"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives; and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," Isaiah lxi. 1, 2. "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord," Luke iv. 17—19.—"Men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him," Isaiah lxiv. 4. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him," 1 Cor. ii. 9.—

"I am sought of them that asked not for me: I am found of them that sought me not. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people," Isaiah lxv. 1, 2. "But Esaias is very bold and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people," Rom. x. 20, 21. —"The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all these things hath mine hand made," Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2. "As saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?" Acts vii. 48—50.*

See further—

Is. i. 3.—Jer. viii. 7.
i. 11. vi. 20.
Amos v. 21, 22.
Mal. i. 10.
i. 15.—Jer. xiv. 12.
Mic. iii. 4.
Zech. vii. 13.
i. 17. vii. 9.
i. 23.—Jer. v. 28.
Zech. vii. 10.
ii. 2. viii. 21.
ii. 19.—Hos. x. 8.
Luke xxiii. 30.
Rev. vi. 15, 16.
v. 1.—Jer. ii. 21.
Matt. xxi. 33.
Mark xii. 1.
Luke xx. 9.
vi. 3.—Rev. iv. 8.
Is. vi. 9.—Mark iv. 12.
Luke viii. 10.
vii. 14. i. 31.
viii. 14. ii. 34.
1 Pet. ii. 8.
viii. 15.—Matt. xxi. 44.
Luke xx. 18.
viii. 18.—Heb. ii. 13.
ix. 6.—Luke i. 32, 33.
xi. 1.—Acts xiii. 23.
Zech. iii. 8.
vi. 12.
xi. 4.—2 Thess. ii. 8.
xiii. 10.—Ezek. xxxii. 7.
Joel ii. 31.
iii. 15.
Matt. xxiv. 29.
Mark xiii. 24.
Luke xxi. 25.
xiii. 19. Jer. l. 40.

31. *Jeremiah.*] The human authorship of this work, is also announced to us in the work itself—being told, in the first verse of the first chapter,

Is. xv. 2.—Jer. xlviii. 37, 38.
Ezek. vii. 18.
xvi. 6.—Jer. xlviii. 29.
xvi. 7. xlviii. 20.
xvi. 10. xlviii. 33.
xxi. 9.—Rev. xiv. 8.
xviii. 2.
xxii. 4.—Jer. iv. 19.
ix. 1.
xxiv. 2.—Hos. iv. 9.
xxiv. 8.—Ezek. xxvi. 13.
Hos. ii. 11.
xxv. 8.—Rev. vii. 17.
xxi. 4.
xxvi. 21.—Mic. i. 3.
xxviii. 16.—Matt. xxi, 42.
Acts iv. 11.
Rom. x. 11.
Eph. ii. 20.
xxxi. 6.—Zech. i. 4.
xxxiii. 9.—Nahum i. 4.
xxxiii. 18.—1 Cor. i. 20.
xxxiv. 4.—Rev. vi. 14.
vi. 13.
xxxiv. 10. xviii. 18.
xix. 3.
xxxiv. 11.—Zeph. ii. 14.
Rev. xviii. 2.
xxxv. 3.—Heb. xii. 12.
xxxv. 5.—Matt. ix. 27, &c.
xi. 5.
xii. 22.
xx. 30, &c.
xxi. 14.
John ix. 6, 7.
Mark vii. 32, &c.
xxxv. 6.—Matt. xi. 5.
xv. 30.
xxi. 14.
John v. 8, 9.
Acts iii. 2, &c.
viii. 7.
Is. xxxv. 6.—Acts xiv. 8.
Matt. ix. 32, 33.
xii. 22.
xv. 30.
John vii. 38, 39.
xxxvi. 1.—2 Kings xviii. 13.
2 Chr. xxxii. 1.
xxxvi. 6.—Ezek. xxix. 6, 7.
xxxvii. 1, &c.—2 Kings xix. 1, &c.
xxxvii. 32. xix. 31.
xxxvii. 35. xx. 6.
xxxvii. 36. xix. 35.
xxxviii. 1. xx. 1, &c.
2 Chr. xxxii. 24.
xxxix. 1.—2 Kings xx. 12, &c.
xl. 6.—1 Pet. i. 24.
xl. 8. i. 25.
xl. 13.—Rom. xi. 34.
1 Cor. ii. 16.
xli. 4.—Rev. i. 17.
xxii. 13.
xli. 8.—James ii. 23.
xlii. 1.—Matt. iii. 17.
xvii. 5.
Eph. i. 6.
xlii. 6.—Luke ii. 32.
Acts xiii. 47.
xlii. 7.—Luke iv. 18.
Heb. ii. 14, 15.
xliii. 5.—Jer. xxx. 10.
xlvi. 27.
xliii. 11.—Hos. xiii. 4.
xliv. 3.—Joel ii. 28.
John vii. 38.
xliv. 6.—Rev. i. 8, 17.
xxii. 13.
xliv. 12.—Jer. x. 3.
xliv. 28.—2 Chr. xxxvi. 22, 23.
Ezra i. 1, &c.
xlv. 9.—Jer. xviii. 6.
Rom. ix. 20.

that, it consists of "the words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah." The use of the first person is also frequent—as in i. 4, &c.; iii. 6; ix. 1, &c., &c.—and in xxxvi. 1, &c., we read of a commandment from the Lord to Jeremiah by name—that he should write his prophecies in a book, for the purpose of their being publicly read in the temple. We have besides express notice of him in sacred history—as in 2 Chr. xxxv. 25, and xxxvi. 21, 22—the last of these notices being repeated in the beginning of the book of Ezra. A divine original is expressly claimed for the book of Jeremiah at its commencement; and may be gathered from xxxiv. 2, and other places. It may also be argued from the

Is. xlv. 13.—2 Chr. xxxvi. 22, 23.
Ezra i. 1, &c.
xlv. 23.—Phil. ii. 10.
xlvi. 1.—Jer. l. 2.
xlvii. 7.—Rev. xviii. 7.
xlviii. 12. i. 17.
xxii. 13.
xlix. 6.—Acts xiii. 47.
xlix. 9.—Zech. ix. 12.
xlix. 10.—Rev. vii. 16.
xlix. 26. xvi. 6.
l. 4.—Matt. xi. 28.
l. 6. xxvi. 67.
xxvii. 26.
l. 8.—Rom. viii. 32, 33.
li. 9.—Ezek. xxix. 3.
li. 15.—Jer. xxxi. 35.
lii. 5.—Rom. ii. 24.
lii. 10.—Luke iii. 6.
lii. 11.—2 Cor. vi. 17.
Rev. xviii. 4.
liii. 3.—Mark ix. 12.
liii 5.—1 Cor. xv. 3.
1 Pet. ii. 24.
liii. 7.—Matt. xxvi. 63.
xxvii. 12.
Mark xiv. 61.

Is. liii. 7.—Mark xv. 5.
liii. 9.—1 Pet. ii. 22.
liii. 12.—Luke xxiii. 34.
lv. 1.—John vii. 37.
lviii. 5.—Zech. vii. 5
lix. 17.—Eph. vi. 14, 17.
1 Thess. v. 8.
lix. 20.—Rom. xi. 26
lx. 3.—Rev. xxi. 24.
lx. 11. xxi. 25.
lx. 14. iii. 9.
lx. 19. xxi. 23.
xxii. 5.
Zech. xiv. 7.
lxiii. 2.—Rev. xix. 13.
lxv. 1.—Eph. ii. 12, 13.
lxv. 12.—Jer. vii. 13.
lxv. 17.—2 Pet. iii. 13.
Rev. xxi. 1.
lxv. 19. xxi. 4.
lxvi. 1.—Acts xvii. 24.
lxvi. 21.—1 Pet. ii. 9.
Rev. i. 6.
lxvi. 22.—2 Pet. iii. 13.
Rev. xxi. 1.
lxvi. 24.—Mark ix. 44.

known fulfilment of its predictions—as in chap. xxv. 11, 12, and xxix. 10—followed up by a noble consecutive testimony on the part of the prophet Daniel.—"And the whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations," Jer. xxv. 11, 12. "In the first year of his reign, I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem," Daniel ix. 2. We subjoin a few more of these scriptural attestations. —"Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?" Jer. vii. 11. "But ye have made it (my house) a den of thieves," Matt. xxi. 13. See also Mark xi. 17; Luke xix. 46. "Now therefore, go speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good," Jer. xviii. 11. "Be ye not as your fathers unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings," Zech. i. 4.—"Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you," Jer. xxix. 12. "And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer

and supplications," Dan. ix. 3.—"Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not," Jer. xxxi. 15—followed up by this most satisfactory authentication. "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not," Matt. ii. 18. The next is a highly important quotation.—"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people," &c. Jer. xxxi. 31—33, &c. "He (God) saith, Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the cove-

nant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people," &c. Heb. viii. 8—10, &c. The same quotation is repeated in Heb. x. 16, 17, as the saying of the Holy Ghost—a direct statement of the inspiration of Jeremiah.—"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner," Jer. xxxiii. 38. "Then they builded even unto the tower of Hananeel," Neh. iii. 1.*

* See further—
Jer. i. 8.—Ezek. iii. 9.
ii. 6.—Hos. xiii. 4.
ii. 21.—Matt. xxi. 33.
Mark xii. 1.
Luke xx. 9.
ii. 30.—Matt. xxiii. 29, &c
iii. 12.—Zech. i. 4.
iii. 22.—Hos. xiv. 1, 4.
vi. 14.—Ezek. xiii. 10.
vi. 20.—Amos v. 21.
Mic. vi. 6.
Mal. i. 10.
vi. 28.—Ezek. xxii. 18.
ix. 4, 29.—Mic. vii. 5, 6.
ix. 24.—1 Cor. i. 31.
2 Cor. x. 17.
ix. 26.—Rom. ii. 28.
x. 7.—Rev. xv. 4.
xi. 3.—Gal. iii. 10.
xi. 11.—Zech. vii. 13.
xiii. 17.—Lam. i. 2, 16.
ii. 18.
xiv. 12.—Zech. vii. 13.
xiv. 17.—Lam. i. 16.
ii. 18.
xv. 1.—Ezek. xiv. 14.
xv. 2.—Zech. xi. 9.
xv. 9.—Amos viii. 9.
xv. 16.—Ezek. iii. 3.
Rev. x. 9.
Jer. xvi. 9.—Ezek. xxvi. 13.
xvii. 10.—Rev. ii. 23.
xviii. 6.—Rom. ix. 21.
xviii. 8.—Jonah iii. 10.
xviii. 11.—2 Kings xvii. 13.
Zech. i. 4.
xxiii. 1. xi. 17.
xxiii. 5. iii. 8.
vi. 12.
xxiii. 17.—Ezek. xiii. 10.
xxiii. 24.—Amos ix. 2, 3.
xxiv. 7.—Ezek. xi. 19.
xxxvi. 26, 27.
xxv. 30.—Joel iii. 16.
Amos i. 2.
xxvi. 2.—Acts xx. 27.
xxvii. 5.—Dan. iv. 17, 25.
xxix. 10.—2 Chr. xxxvi. 21, 22.
Dan. ix. 2.
xxx. 9.—Ezek. xxxiv. 23.
xxxvii. 24.
Hos. iii. 5.
xxxi. 1.—2 Cor. vi. 16.
Heb. xiii. 10.
xxxi. 29.—Ezek. xviii. 2.
xxxi. 31.—Heb. x. 16.
xxxi. 34.—John vi. 45.
Mic. vii. 18.
Acts x. 43.
xxxii. 39.—Ezek. xi. 19.
xxxiii. 15.—Zech. iii. 8.

32. *Lamentations.*] This beautiful poem bears upon it the internal evidence of its likeness to other effusions, from the pen of Jeremiah its reputed author.* The only other scriptural resemblance that we notice is the following—"Thou hast made us as the offscouring and refuse in the midst of the people," Lam. iii. 45. "We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day," 1 Cor. iv. 13. Compare also Lam. ii. 17 with Zech. i. 6.

33. *Ezekiel.*] The writer of this book lays claim repeatedly to supernatural communications from heaven—"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord," &c. Certain it is that Ezekiel holds a distinguished place in the traditions and estimation of the Jews; and is expressly named as one of their prophets by Josephus. He prophesied in Chaldea, at the time when Jeremiah prophesied in Jerusalem. There is a remarkable similarity between several of his images, and those in the

Jer. xxxiii. 15.—Zech. vi. 12.
xxxiv. 1.—2 Kings xxv. 1, &c.
xxxvii. 1. xxiv. 17.
2 Chr. xxxvi. 10.
xxxix. 1.—2 Kings xxv. 1.
xli. 2. xxv. 25.
xlix. 1.—Amos i. 14.
xlix. 7.—Obad. 8.
xlix. 9 5.
xlix. 14. 1.
xlix. 16. 4.
xlix. 27.—Amos i. 4.
l. 8.—Rev. xviii. 4.
li. 6. xviii. 4.
li. 8. xiv. 8.
li. 14.—Amos vi. 8.
lii. 21.—2 Kings xv. 17.

* See—

Lam. i. 2.—Jer. xiii. 17.
i. 12. x. 19.
xlv. 3.
i. 16. ix. 1, 18.
i. 20. xlviii. 36.
ii. 14. v. 31.
xiv. 13.
xxiii. 16.
iii. 14. xx. 7.
iii. 48, 49. ix. 1, 18.
xiii. 17.
xiv. 17.
iv. 13. v. 31.
xxiii. 21.
v. 21. xxxi. 18.

Apocalypse.—"Open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee." "Moreover he said unto me, Son of man eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness," Ezek. ii. 8; iii. 1—3. "And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey," Rev. x. 9.—"And the Lord said, Go through the midst of the city, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof," Ezek. ix. 4. "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads," Rev. vii. 3.—"Thy riches, and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that are in thee, and in all thy company which is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin—and all shall lament over thee, saying, What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?" Ezek. xxvii. 27—32. See also Ezek. xxvi. 17. "And the kings of the earth shall lament for her, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city. And the merchants of the earth shall mourn over her, and stand afar off, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas,

alas, that great city," &c. Rev. xviii. 9—16.—"Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog," Ezek. xxxviii. 2. "And Satan shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog," &c. Rev. xx. 7, 8.—"Behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. These waters, being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed," Ezek. xlvii. 7, 8. See also Ezek. xlvii. 12. "In the midst of either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations," Rev. xxii. 2. The only other scriptural resemblance that we shall produce here is the following.—"Their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord," Ezek. vii. 19. "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath," Zeph. i. 18.*

34. *Daniel.*] The similarity between the prophecies of Daniel and those of the Apocalypse has been long remarked. "Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him," Dan. vii. 10. "And I heard the voice of many angels: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and

* See further—
Ezek. viii. 3.—Dan. v. 5.
xi. 3.—2 Pet. iii. 4.
xii. 21. iii. 4.
xviii. 29.—Zech. i. 4.
xviii. 32.—2 Pet. iii. 9.
xxii. 27.—Zeph. iii. 3.
xxiv. 9.—Nahum iii. 1.
Hab. ii. 12.
Ezek. xxviii. 2.—Zech. ix. 2, &c.
xxx. 13. xiii. 2.
xxxi. 6.—Dan. iv. 12.
xxxiv. 4.—1 Pet v. 3.
xxxiv. 23.—John x. 11.
xxxiv. 31. x. 11.
xxxvi. 20.—Rom. ii. 24.
xlvii. 1.—Zech. xiv. 8.

thousands of thousands," Rev. v. 11.—"The judgment was set and the books were opened," Dan. vii. 10. "And the books were opened; and the dead judged out of those things which were written in the books," Rev. xx. 12.—"Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude," Dan. x. 5, 6. "And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice was as the sound of many waters," Rev. i. 13—15. The illustrious testimony given by our Saviour to this prophet, fully countervails any discredit which the Jews have attempted to fasten upon him, by their distinction between prophetical and sacred books—a distinction rejected by Christian theologians. "For the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate," Dan. ix. 27. "When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place," Matt. xxiv. 15. See also Mark xiii. 14, and Luke xxi. 20. The contemporaneous testimony given by Ezekiel, both to the existence of Daniel, and to the high rank which he held in the estimation of the Jews, we have in Ezek. xiv. 14, 20—

and also in the irony of the address by the same prophet to the prince of Tyrus—"Behold thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee," Ezek. xxviii. 3. The name of Daniel, fixing on him the authorship of this book, occurs repeatedly throughout its chapters—vi. 20; vii. 15; viii. 15, 27; ix. 2, 22; x. 2, 11; xii. 4, 5, 9. He is throughout represented as the subject of special communications from God. The following instance of a revelation like to the apocalyptic ones should be added to the former ones. "And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and an half," Dan. xii. 7. "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven; and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, That there should be time no longer," Rev. x. 5, 6.*

35. *Hosea.*] We now enter on the consideration of the "minor prophets," whose works, amounting separately to twelve, were bound up in one volume; and were altogether ranked as but one of their scriptural books by the Jews. The application to them of the epithet minor, respects the quantity, and not the authority, of their writ-

* See further—
Dan. i. 1.—2 Kings xxiv. 1. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 6.
iv. 34.—Mic. iv. 7. Luke i. 33.
vi. 26. i. 33.
vii. 14.—Mic. iv. 7. Dan. vii. 14.—Luke i. 33.
vii. 27. i. 33.
xii. 2.—Matt. xxv. 46. John v. 29.
xii. 3.—Matt. xiii. 43. 1 Cor. xv. 40.

ings. The Jews frequently spake of them as *the twelve*, in like manner as the apostles are spoken of in various parts of the New Testament. The authorship of the prophecy of Hosea, is ascribed to him in the prophecy itself—he being named in the commencement, and making use of the first person, particularly in the third chapter of the book. He is the subject of undoubted and express quotations in the New Testament. The first of those which follow is most conclusive. "And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God," Hos. i. 10. "As he saith also in Osee—And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God," Rom. ix. 25, 26.—"I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God," Hos. ii. 23. "Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God," 1 Pet. ii. 10.—"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice," Hos. vi. 6. "Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," Matt. ix. 13. See also Matt. xii. 7.—"I called my son out of Egypt," Hos. xi. 1. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son," Matt. ii. 15.—"O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction," Hos. xiii. 14. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy

victory?" 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.—"So will we render the calves of our lips," Hos. xiv. 2. "By him, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips," Heb. xiii. 15.—Considering the small amount of the book, it is peculiarly rich in the scriptural evidence by which it is supported.*

36. *Joel.*] Even for this brief composition, there are not wanting some decisive references in the New Testament. Peter in the Acts of the Apostles quotes it, and gives the name of the author—which also occurs at the commencement of the book. There are one or two more undoubted citations of this prophecy, which are either given here, or pointed to in a foot note below.—"And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke," &c. Joel ii. 28—30, &c. "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,) I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit; and they shall prophesy," &c. Acts ii.

* See further—
Hosea ii. 23.—Rom. ix. 26.
iv. 1.—Mic. vi. 2.
Hosea vi. 2.—1 Cor. xv. 4.
x. 8.—Luke xxiii. 30.
Rev. vi. 16.

16—18, &c.—"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," Joel ii. 32. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," Rom. x. 13.—"Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe," Joel iii. 13. "Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe," Rev. xiv. 15.*

37. *Amos.*] This book also has its incorporated title, and its announced claim to inspiration. "And the Lord took me, as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go prophesy unto my people Israel," vii. 15. The name of Amos occurs, with the use of the first person, repeatedly in the book, as throughout the whole of the 7th chapter, and in viii. 1, 2; ix. 1. He is twice quoted in the New Testament, not by name, but as belonging to "the prophets;" and in such a manner as might lead one to imagine, that the volume in which he was bound up along with the others, might have been referred to by its title. It was a volume which comprehended all the minor prophets; and so, if these quotations are to be regarded as a homologation of the whole volume from which they are taken, they might, without any stretch of argument, be pled as testimonies, in behalf not only of Amos himself, but of the other eleven with whom he was associated.—"Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty

* See further—
Joel i. 15.—Is. xiii. 6.
ii. 10. xiii. 10.
Ezek. xxxii. 7.
ii. 11.—Jer. xxx. 7.
Amos v. 18.
Zeph. i. 15.
Joel ii. 13.—Jonah iv. 2.
ii. 14. iii. 9
ii. 28.—Is. xliv. 3.
iii. 10. ii. 4.
iii. 17.—Zech. xiv. 21.
iii. 28.—Amos ix. 13.
Zech. xiv. 8.

years, O house of Israel? But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves: Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus," Amos v. 25—27. "As it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon," Acts vii. 42, 43.—"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old, That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this," Amos ix. 11, 12. "And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things," Acts xv. 17.*

* See further—
Amos i. 1.—Zech. xiv. 5.
i. 2.—Jer. xxv. 30.
Joel iii. 16.
v. 8.—Job ix. 9.
xxxviii. 31.
v. 11.—Zeph. i. 13.
v. 15.—Rom. xii. 9.
v. 18.—Is. v. 19.
Amos v. 18.—Jer. xvii. 15.
Joel ii. 2.
Zeph. i. 15.
vi. 3.—Ezek. xii. 27.
vi. 8.—Jer. li. 14.
vii. 16.—Ezek. xxi. 2.
viii. 4.—Jer. xliv. 11.
ix. 7.—Jer. xlvii. 4.

38. *Obadiah.*] In this "vision of Obadiah," the name of the *seer* is given at the commencement; and the prophetical authority is assumed by the writer in these words—"Thus saith the Lord God." The greater part of it bears a close resemblance in substance, and very nearly in expression, to certain passages in other prophets—as Jeremiah xlix, and Ezekiel xxxv. It does not seem to be quoted, for the confirmation of any fact or doctrine, in the New Testament—unless its undoubted place in the book of the minor prophets, entitles it to a share of the homage rendered to that book, when referred to as containing words, though not to be found in Obadiah, but in Amos. The sentence in 1 Cor. i. 19, though taken generically from scripture, is considered to be from Isaiah, but finds at least an echo in this kindred verse of Obadiah. "Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?" v. 8. The remaining examples of an affinity to other scriptures are given below.*

39. *Jonah.*] For the existence and character of this most ancient of the prophets, we have the evidence of contemporaneous history in 2 Kings xiv. 25. "According to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet,

* See—
Obadiah 1.—Jer. xlix. 14.
4. xlix. 16.
5. xlix. 9.
8.—Is. xxix. 14.
Jer. xlix. 7.
Obadiah 10.—Ezek. xxxv. 15.
Amos i. 11.
15.—Ezek. xxxv. 15.
21.—1 Tim. iv. 16.
James v 20.
Luke i. 33.

which was of Gath-hepher." His name is announced at the commencement of the prophecy, and occurs repeatedly throughout; and our Saviour Himself bears him express testimony in the following words—"A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas," Matt. xvi. 4. See also Matt. xii. 39, 40, and Luke xi. 29, 30. Again—"So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them, even to the least of them," Jonah iii. 5. "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here," Matt. xii. 41.*

40. *Micah.*] There is a very noble contemporaneous, or rather subsequent testimony given to this prophet by Jeremiah (xxvi. 18)—who not only gives his name, the place of his nativity, and the age in which he flourished; but makes an express quotation from his writings. "Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.'" "Therefore shall Zion, for your sake, be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house, as the high places of the forest," Micah iii.

* See further—
Jonah iii. 5.—Luke xi. 32.
Jonah iii. 9.—Joel ii. 14.
iv. 2.—Joel ii. 13.

12. The following are quotations from Micah in the New Testament—"But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel," Micah v. 2. "For thus it is written by the prophet, 'And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come forth a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel,'" Matt. ii. 5, 6. "See also John vii. 42.—"For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: a man's enemies are the men of his own house," Micah vii. 6. "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household," Matt. x. 35, 36. The name of the prophet is given at the commencement, and a very express statement is made by him of his own inspiration—"Truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin," Micah iii. 8. He was one of the earlier prophets; and, when his writings are compared with the direct history, it will be found that they shed a mutual light and confirmation on each other.*

* See further—

icah i. 2.	—Is. i. 2.
i. 10.	—Jer. vi. 26.
i. 11.	—Is. xlvii. 3.
i. 16.	xxii. 12.
Micah ii. 2.	—Is. v. 8.
ii. 6.	xxx. 10.
iv. 1—3.	ii. 2, &c. Zech. viii. 21, &c.
iv. 3.	—Joel iii. 10.

41. *Nahum.*] This eloquent and sublime prophecy is ushered in as the book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. The first clause of the 15th verse of the first chapter is almost identical with the first clause of Isaiah lii. 7—and the words are quoted as *written*, or, which is tantamount to this, as *scripture*, by Paul in Romans x. 15.*

42. *Habakkuk.*] The name of the prophet is given here also at the outset of the prophecy; and occurs again at the commencement of the sublime prayer in the third chapter. He speaks also in his own person in ii. 1—while in ii. 2, he quotes the express commandment of God for the writing of his prophecy—and this in order that it may be read, "that he may run that readeth it." The following are very striking and satisfactory quotations from this sacred writer. "Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you," Hab. i. 5. "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you,"

Micah iv. 6.—Zeph. iii. 19.
iv. 7.—Luke i. 33.
v. 5.—Eph. v. 14.
vi. 2.—Is. i. 2.
vi. 8.—Deut. x. 12.
vi. 15.—Haggai i. 6.
vii. 2.—Is. lvii. 1.
vii. 6.—Matt. x. 21.
Luke xii. 53.
vii. 11.—Amos ix. 11.

* See—
Nahum i. 15.—Is. lii. 7.
ii. 10.—Is. xiii. 7, 8.
iii. 1.—Ezek. xxiv. 6, 9.
Habak. ii. 12.
iii. 5.—Is. xlvii. 2, 3.
Ezek. xvi. 37
iii. 11.—Jer. xxv. 17.

Acts xiii. 40, 41.—"Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry," Hab. ii. 3. "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry," Heb. x. 37.—"But the just shall live by his faith," Hab. ii. 4. "Now the just shall live by faith," Heb. x. 38. "As it is written, The just shall live by faith," Rom. i. 17. See also Gal. iii. 11.—"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," Hab. ii. 14. "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," Isaiah xi. 9.*

43. *Zephaniah.*] The name of the author is incorporated with the work; and the work itself is announced as "the word that came from the Lord." The references from, or affinities to other scripture are given below.†

44. *Haggai.*] The existence and character of this prophet are attested in the book of Ezra.

* See further—
Habak. i. 4.—Jer. xii. 1.
i. 8. v. 6.
Ezek. xvii. 3.
Zeph. iii. 3.
i. 13.—Jer. xii. 1.
ii. 1.—Is. xxi. 8.
ii. 4.—John iii. 36.
ii. 9.—Jer. xxii. 13.
ii. 12.—Ezek. xxiv. 9.
Nah. iii. 1.
ii. 16.—Jer. xxv. 26.
ii. 18.—Jer. x. 8, 14.
Zech. x. 2.

† See—
Zeph. i. 13.—Amos v. 11.
i. 15.—Jer. xxx. 7.
Joel ii. 11.
i. 18.—Ezek. vii. 19.
ii. 9, 10.—Jer. xlviii. 2, &c.
Ezek. xxv. 1, &c.
ii. 14.—Is. xxxiv. 11.
ii. 15. xlvii. 8.
iii. 4.—Jer. xxiii. 11.
Hos. ix. 7.
Ezek. xxii. 26.
iii. 9.—Matt. xxviii. 19.
Acts xv. 14, 17.
John iv 23.
Rom. xv. 6, 16.
iii. 12.—1 Cor. i. 26.
iii. 13.—Rom. xi. 5.
iii. 14.—Is. xii. 6.
liv. 1.
iii. 18.—Gal. iv. 39.
Col. ii. 14, 20
iii. 19.—Mic. iv. 7.

"Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel," Ezra v. 1. "And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo," Ezra vi. 14. Both the name and mission of this prophet are announced at the commencement of the book; and not only in i. 12, is he designed a prophet; but in the following verse is he spoken of as "the Lord's messenger," delivering the "Lord's message unto the people." The name of the prophet repeatedly occurs in the course of his prophecy; and he has the benefit of at least one very decisive quotation in the New Testament. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land," Hag. ii. 6. "But now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also the heaven," Heb. xii. 26.*

45. *Zechariah.*] The name of this prophet is associated with that of Haggai, in the book of Ezra—as may be seen from the quotations given in the last article. It is also introduced at the commencement of the prophecy; and is repeated in the seventh verse of the first chapter. The use of the first person occurs everywhere throughout the book. And God Himself is made to take up the word, as it were, from the mouth of the prophet, and to speak in His own person—v. 4; vii. 9; viii. 2, &c. There are many illustrious testimo-

* See further—
Haggai i. 6.—Micah vi. 14, 15. | Haggai ii. 17.—Amos iv. 9.

nies in the Gospels to the prophetical character of this book.—"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass," Zech. ix. 9. "All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass," Matt. xxi. 4, 5. See also John xii. 14, 15.—"And the Lord said unto me, cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them! And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord," Zech. xi. 13. "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value: and gave them for the potter's field as the Lord appointed me," Matt. xxvii. 9, 10.—"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced," Zech. xii. 10. "And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced," John xix. 37.—"Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered," Zech. xiii. 7. "For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered," Mark xiv. 27. See also Matt. xxvi. 31.*

46. *Malachi.*] The name of the prophet is given with the book at the commencement of it.

* See further—
Zech. i. 3.—Mal. ii. 7.
ii. 10.—2 Cor. vi. 16.
iii. 2.—Jude 9.
viii. 16.—Eph. iv. 25.
xi. 13.—Matt. xxvi. 15.
xii. 10.—John xix. 34.
Zech. xii. 10.—Rev. i. 7.
xiii. 9.—1 Pet. i. 6, 7.
xiv. 7.—Rev. xxii. 5.
xxi. 23.
xiv. 8. xxii. 1.
xiv. 21.—Rev. xxi. 27.
xxii. 15.

And most decisive quotations are made from him by the Apostle Paul, and the Evangelists.—"I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau," Mal. i. 2, 3. "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," Rom. ix. 13.—"Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me," Malachi iii. 1. "For this is he of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before me," Matt. xi. 10. See also Mark i. 2, and Luke vii. 27.—"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers," Malachi iv. 5, 6. "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children," Luke i. 17.*

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47. We have now presented all the scriptural testimonies for which we can possibly afford room. There is no such mass, and no such firm contexture of evidence, for the existence or authority of any ancient book, as we have for the canon of the Old Testament. The strength of this evidence does not altogether lie in those quotations from the later writers, which either name some prior book in the collection, or which name the author of it. There is many an undoubted quotation

* See further—
Mal. ii. 10.—Eph. iv. 6.
iii. 1.—Luke i. 76.
iii. 7.—Zech. i. 3.
Mal. iv. 2.—Luke i. 78.
iv. 5.—Matt. xi. 14.
Mark ix. 11.

announcing itself to be such by the manner in which it is introduced, as when taken generally from "scripture," or when said to be a thing already "written;" or, still more specifically, when said to be "written in the prophets;" or lastly, when said to have been spoken by God Himself, and when what is thus spoken we find to be in the Old Testament.* Over and above these we can, apart from any note of introduction whatever, detect the words of a later writer to have been a quotation, from their close resemblance to the words of an elder one; and lastly the recital of the same historical facts in the more recent, that we find to be narrated in the more ancient scriptures, may be argued for the existence of the earlier record as a creditable document from which the information has been taken; and the more if it be the only record that has come down to us of the history in question. There is a far greater likelihood, that the innumerable consistent allusions to the Jewish history, which are to be found in the later scriptures, were derived from written memorials than from oral tradition—handed down with such uniformity, and with such particularity, and such fulness, through a track of centuries. And we may be sure that the very memorials which furnished the information, would have had infinitely better chance of being transmitted to

* "But now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven," Heb. xii. 26—an undoubted quotation from Haggai ii. 6, though without the mention of its being written at all, either by Haggai or in scripture. It is represented as the voice of "Him that speaketh from heaven;" and many other instances occur of such virtual, though somewhat disguised quotations.

later times, than other memorials, which, if not worthy of being consulted, would not be held worthy of being preserved. The credit in which any books were held by the men of a remote age, is our best guarantee for the care wherewith they would be transmitted to their children, and through them onward to the most distant posterity. In other words, the books which gave to the Jews at the time of our Saviour, and for some centuries before, that historical knowledge on which they placed their reliance, must be the very books that we have received from their hands; and thus, in the identity of statement between the reputed later and the reputed earlier of these sacred writings, do we find a strong evidence for the reality of the earlier writings. For the full impression of this argument, we must divest ourselves of the rooted and established tendency to view the Bible as one book—it being in truth an aggregate of distinct books, which found a place there only because of the credit and confidence which they enjoyed in ancient times; and on which account, they are entitled to all the greater credit and confidence from us in the present day. Each testimony is just the more valuable, that it is a Bible testimony; and when viewed therefore what each ought to be as an independent testimony, never, may it well be said, have any books had so multitudinous an evidence, and that too evidence of which every ingredient taken separately is of such sterling quality and weight, as the books of the Old Testament. From the days of Moses, each successive period has borne downwards safely and solidly

the memorials of the one that went before it, till all at length reached a firm landing-place, in the consent and testimony of our Saviour and his Apostles—by which the Hebrew canon has been made to repose on the stable basement of all the evidence historical and moral, which can be alleged for the truth of Christianity. The canon of the Old Testament is pillared on a foundation as strong as the credibility of the New.*

48. An investigation of the canon of the Old, forms the best preparative for those investigations which lead to the establishment and vindication of the canon of the New Testament. The materials for this inquiry are to be found in Lardner; and a very good digest of these has been given by Paley in his evidences of Christianity. Jones, with many excellent considerations on the subject, is deficient in his exhibition of the positive evidence for our actual Christian scriptures; and he has bestowed his main strength on the disproof of those spurious or pretended scriptures, which, in the name of gospels or epistles, imposed on the credulity of past ages, and have been alleged by modern infidels, for the purpose of casting a general disparagement and discredit on the Christian religion. His book on the canon of the New Testament is altogether worthy, however, of perusal, by the professional student—while, for the general reader, we would recommend Alexander on the Canon, as

* We do not repeat here, though it be a consideration of the utmost possible strength, the concurrence, on this one point of the identity of their scriptures, between Jews and Christians, who stand fiercely opposed in almost all others.

a good though brief manual upon the subject. It must be obvious from the nature of the case, that the scriptural evidence, which might be alleged in such force and fulness for the canon of the Old, must be very scanty, if it exist at all, for the canon of the New Testament—made up, as it has been, not by successive but by contemporaneous authors. Their references to the writings of each other can, in these circumstances, scarcely be looked for, however strong and valuable the concurrence of their independent depositions be, in regard to the great and common subject matter of all their writings. There is an undoubted reference in the writings of Peter to those of Paul, with this most important qualification too, that he as good as calls them scriptures; and assigns them co-ordinate rank and authority with the Jewish scriptures. See 2 Peter iii. 16—where, after having introduced the epistles of Paul to the notice of his readers, he complains of those unlearned and unstable, who wrest them, as they did also *the other scriptures*, to their own destruction. It has also been contended by some, that Paul in Rom. ii. 16, makes a reference to the Gospel of Luke, when speaking of "my gospel." This is more doubtful. But to evince the great importance of a prior investigation into the canon of the Old, ere we attempt to investigate the canon of the New Testament—to prove, in short, that, even for the object of establishing the authority of the Christian scriptures, the labour of this chapter has not been thrown away—it should be remarked, as an essential stepping-stone to the latter inquiry, that our chief argu-

ment for the esteem, in which the writings of our evangelists and apostles were held from the earliest days of the church, is, that they are designed by the same title, and that quotations from them are introduced by the same restricted and appropriate phrases, as the more ancient are in the more recent scriptures; and as the Jewish scriptures are, both by Jews and Christians, from the days of the New Testament. It is a mighty circumstance, that Peter should do the same homage to the epistles of Paul that he does to the sacred writings of the Jews, by honouring them with the same title ἁι γραφαι—which is tantamount to saying, that the epistles of Paul have as good a title to a place in *the Bible*, as the Psalms of David or the Prophecies of Isaiah. These titles and peculiar phrases do, in fact, form the great link of communication between the Hebrew and the Christian argument for the canonicity of their respective scriptures; or rather go to identify them both into a common argument. When we read in the New Testament, or in any Jewish author, that "it is written," we may expect a quotation from the Hebrew scriptures; and when we read the same words in a Christian father, we may expect a quotation from the Christian scriptures. The latter, in fact, designate the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, and quote from them both in the very same way. The language which the New Testament uses, when signalizing the works of patriarchs and prophets, over all other works, is bequeathed to the fathers of the Christian church; and they make use of the very same language, by which to

signalize, in like manner, the works of the evangelists and apostles. We find through the New Testament itself, a midway passage from the argument which establishes the canon of the Old to that which establishes the canon of the New Testament; and we shall find it is by the very same midway passage, that, beginning with the inspiration of the Old Testament, we are led more surely and clearly than by any other track, to the inspiration of the New. In both arguments, the mighty importance of that prior investigation, by which we first ascertain what are the Hebrew scriptures, and secondly what is the degree of their authority, is alike obvious.

49. If the reader, whether learned or unlearned, shall undertake such an interior examination of scripture as we have now in a certain degree exemplified, he will find it laborious, but fruitful of the best impressions in favour of its perfect honesty and truth. He will meet with many thousand coincidences, which no impostor could ever have devised; and such evidences of reality, all beyond the reach of imitation, as will serve to convince and to confirm him, in a manner that no statement by another at second hand can possibly effectuate. The more thoroughly that he explores, the more will the instances of verisimilitude multiply upon his observation; till he at length sees the semblance to be a substance, and he will feel himself walking on the ground of solid history, and in the midst of actual transactions. It is thus that the Bible as it has been called its own best interpreter, will be also found its own best witness; and that, not a single, but a marvellously sustained

and multiplied testimony—for, looking to the composition of this volume, it is not at the mouth of two or three, but at the mouth at least of thirty witnesses, that the words of it are established.

CHAPTER II.

On the Inspiration of the Old and New Testaments.

1. The question which respects the Canon of Scripture, is distinct from that which respects the Inspiration of it. The object of the one is to ascertain, what are the actual books, which should be received into this collection of sacred writings. The object of the other is to ascertain, what are the kind and degree of their authority. We may allow a book to be canonical, and yet maintain opinions of all sorts and varieties in regard to the fulness or the partiality of its inspiration. The disciple of a plenary inspiration may deny to certain of our present scriptural books their title to a place in the canon; or he may contend that certain ex-scriptural books should also have occupancy there. On the other hand the disciple of a partial and limited inspiration, or one who affirms of some books in scripture as the prophetical that they are divinely inspired, while of the others as the historical that they are only the best and most faithful of all human compositions—he may be perfectly satisfied with the actual composition of our present

Bible, and find no fault either in defect or in excess with any of its ingredients. The question what ought to be the ingredients of this composition, is altogether distinct from the question which respects the precise quality of these ingredients. It is true that the canonical are signalized above all other books, and are invested with a certain religious authority over the faith and consciences of men. But still it remains to be determined in how far they are thus signalized—by what height or at what distance are they elevated above them? What is the amount of this distinction? Whether these scriptures shall be received as absolutely perfect and infallible?—or must we concede to a certain extent that they are tinged with human infirmity, and must be received some of them at least as the productions only of creditable men, but not out and out as unerring records both of the history which they narrate and of the mind and purposes of the unerring God? After the canon of the scripture is fixed, these are questions which remain to be settled under the all-important theme of the degree of their inspiration.

2. We have already said, that to begin our inquiry with the Inspiration of the Old Testament forms our best outset for the establishment of the Inspiration of the New. In regard to many of the writers in the former collection, such is the profusion of testimonies as to God speaking in them, and the word which they uttered and put into a book being the very word of God, that we shall not attempt a full or adequate exhibition of them. Moses "wrote all the words of the law."

"The spirit of the Lord spoke by me," says David. "David in spirit calls him Lord." "The Holy Ghost spoke by the mouth of David." "The Holy Ghost sayeth, To-day if ye will hear his voice"—words spoken through the mouth, and transmitted through the pen of David. "Thou, God, by the mouth of thy servant David, hast said, Why did the heathen avenge," &c. God said to Moses,* "I will raise them up a prophet like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command them. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken to my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die." In these words we read, not only the inspiration of Moses and of Christ, but the inspiration of all the true prophets whom Christ would have acknowledged; and we are accordingly told that God "spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began." We cannot afford to go in detail over the proofs of the inspiration of these prophets separately. But, simply adverting to the positive history in the books of Kings and Chronicles that we have for the preternatural communications of God with Solomon, we shall but remark of Isaiah that he ushered in what he

* Compare Mark vii. 10, with Matthew xv. 4—where what Moses is stated to have "said" in the one passage, God is stated in the other to have commanded.

spake by, "saith the Lord," and "the Lord hath spoken;" and that the "Holy Ghost spoke by Esaias"—of Jeremiah, that "The word of the Lord came unto him;" and "The Lord said unto him, Behold I have put my words in thy mouth;" and the commandment given to him, was to "write all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book"—of Ezekiel, that he saw visions of God; that the "Spirit entered into him;" that the "Spirit lift him up;" that "the hand of the Lord was upon him, and carried him about in the spirit of the Lord;" and that, ever and anon, "the word of the Lord came unto him"—of Daniel, that he saw visions, and had revelations that he put into a book—of Hosea, that in calling on the people to hear him, he calls them to "hear the word of the Lord"—of Joel, that his prophecy is styled "the word of the Lord which came unto Joel"—of Amos, that his sayings are given repeatedly under the form of "thus saith the Lord" —of Obadiah in like manner, who, propounding his "vision," begins with "thus saith the Lord" —of "the word of the Lord that came unto Jonah" —of "the word of the Lord that came unto Micah," who was "full of power by the spirit of the Lord"—of the "vision of Nahum"—of the "Lord answering" Habakkuk, and bidding him "write the vision, that he may run that readeth it"—of "the word of the Lord that came unto Zephaniah," who in consequence speaks in his name, and announces that "thus saith the Lord"— of the word of the Lord having come by Haggai, who begins to prophesy with "thus speaketh the

Lord of hosts, saying"—of the word of the Lord having come to Zechariah, who saw visions and held converse with the angels of God—and lastly, of Malachi, whose prophecy is in the terms of a direct communication from God himself, speaking in his own person, "I will send my messenger," "I will come near to you to judgment," "I am the Lord, I change not."

3. Now that the apostles were similarly inspired,* may be inferred from the promises made to them by the Saviour. "It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." "It is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." "The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." "He shall abide with you for ever, even the spirit of truth." "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "When he the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." The spirit, we read historically, did come. The illumination was given; and, as the fruit of it, the apostles could say, "they had the mind of Christ." "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." "The spirit gave them utterance." "They spake the word of God with boldness." "Which things we speak," says Paul, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." "Christ speaking in me." "So ordain I in all the churches." "The

* The identity of the inspirations of the Old and New Testament seems strongly pointed at in 2 Cor. iv. 13.

things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." "My speech and my preaching is in demonstration of the spirit and of power." "We speak the wisdom of God." "Ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God." "It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost and unto us." These are direct proofs from the New Testament, of the inspiration of the apostles. But what gives such importance to the Old Testament evidence for the inspiration of the prophets is, the similarity in point of endowment and of authority, which is alleged to have obtained, between the teachers of the Old and those of the New dispensation. "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before, by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." "We are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."

4. But many are willing to admit the inspiration both of prophets and apostles, who stand in doubt of certain of the other scriptural writers. For aught we assuredly know, the historical, and some of the other books in the Old Testament, may have been written by men, not invested with the prophetical office; and we do assuredly know that the Gospels of Mark and Luke, with the book of Acts, were written by men not invested with the apostolical office. In regard to many of

the elder scriptures, so far from knowing whether the men who wrote them were inspired, we do not even know the names of their authors. And besides, we might know of certain writers that they were at times visited with extraordinary communications from on high, or were occasionally inspired; but when the question relates to a composition, of which perhaps they were the undoubted authors, the writing of it might not have been one of these occasions. They might not have been under the prompting or guidance of this heavenly power, when writing the book in question. They might not have been inspired *ad hunc effectum*. No one who has a general faith in the records of the Old and New Testament, resting on the common evidences of their general credibility, can doubt the special communications which Solomon received from God. But this does not settle the question, whether he was under the special and infallible direction of God in writing the book of Proverbs, or of Ecclesiastes, or of the Canticles—so as that these should be regarded as the Divine workmanship, God himself being the author of them. Nothing that has yet been produced, in behalf of the words and writings of those men, who properly and strictly were prophets, or of those whom scripture has fully equalled to them as being apostles, can serve to establish the inspiration of the historical or certain of the poetical books in the Old Testament; or the inspiration of two of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles in the New.

5. Now, to meet this allegation of deficiency,

and the demand founded upon it, let it be observed that there are two forms in which a testimony regarding inspiration might be given. It is an ascription which either might be given to the author, or which might be given to his work. The affirmation might be made that Solomon was inspired to write the book of Ecclesiastes; or, without the mention of Solomon at all, it might be affirmed, that the book of Ecclesiastes is the product of inspiration. And in like manner, we may know nothing of the human authorship of the books of Joshua, and Judges, and Ruth, and Samuel, and the Kings, and Chronicles; and yet, we might have abundant evidence of their divine authorship—for though nothing may have been said of the penmen of these books, viewed as writers; enough may have been said of the books themselves, viewed as works. Now it is this which gives such mighty importance to the *voces signatæ*—the special designation that rested exclusively, and by appropriation, on the Hebrew selection of sacred writings, and were applied to none others. No one, of our own day, would misunderstand either the application or extent of that most familiar of all names, the Bible; and every one knows that Ruth, and the Lamentations, and Zechariah, form parts of the Bible. And the name of scripture, or scriptures, or αἱ γραφαι, or τα ἱερα γραμματα, or τα λογια του Θεου, stood expressly in the place, and answered all the purposes of our own names the Bible, and the Holy scriptures, or the Old and New Testament. We, of the present age, might not know the author of

Ruth; but we know that Ruth is in the Bible—and, without being informed who the author of this particular book was, without even the information of it in particular being inspired, we, if credibly informed that the whole Bible was inspired, would thenceforth believe in the inspiration of the book of Ruth, as part and parcel of that Bible. And the very question on which we have been engaged, when labouring to determine whether this one and that other book was canonical, is, whether it entered as a constituent, or formed an integral part of the Jewish scriptures. If first we have testimony for the book of Kings being in scripture, even that scripture recognised by all the Jews, quoted by the apostles, and sanctioned by the Saviour himself; and afterwards have the information which can be depended on, that all scripture is inspired—we require nothing further to be satisfied of the inspiration of the book of Kings. Once its rightful place in the canon of scripture is determined; and then, whatever qualities of worth and perfection belong to scripture generally, must belong to this book particularly. The settlement of the question whether or not a book is canonical, leads, by a direct transition, to the settlement of the question whether or not that book is inspired.

6. There is a two-fold advantage in those testimonies, which speak, not of the powers imparted to the writer, but of the properties impressed upon the book; and, more especially, when these are predicated, not of one particular book, but of the whole collection comprised under the general name

of scripture. The first is that we learn, what is the amount of homage that we might render, and what the degree of confidence we might repose, even in those parts of the Bible of which the authors have not been named, and of whose qualifications as messengers from God to man we have never been told. The writings of the prophets themselves have a fulness of credit given to them from testimonies of this form, which they might not otherwise have possessed. For though repeatedly told of their supernatural converse with heaven, we are not told that *the whole* of their respective books were penned under the guidance of inspiration. But the term scripture covers the whole of their books, and comprehends also the historical and the poetical. From the lack of testimonies in one particular form, we are left uncertain who the authors were of most of the historical books, and are nowhere told of the inspiration of the writers; but this is completely made up by the abundance of testimonies in another particular form, and which speak to us most distinctly and decisively of the inspiration of the writings. We are not told of particular books, that they were written by God's messengers. But we are told of the books themselves, that they form God's message. In fact, the second is a better form than the first. A book may be written by a divine messenger, and yet may not have been written, or at least not all of it have been written by him in that capacity; and so, for ought we know, there might be a mixture in it of the human with the divine, of the earthly with the

heavenly. Not so when informed, generally and without any specified exceptions, of the book being a divine message; for then we read the whole of it with equal reverence, or at least with equal reliance on all its contents—with equal faith in one and all of its passages.

7. But another and no less important advantage of testimonies regarding inspiration in the second form, is that they supersede all the unwarrantable, and we would say all the senseless and unphilosophical speculation, in which the impugners, and occasionally even the defenders of a plenary inspiration, have indulged, on the modes and degrees of inspiration. In much that has been said by these scholastics, not of the middle ages but of the last and even of the present century, on the subjects of guidance and superintendence and elevation and infusion, we can perceive nothing but an illegitimate attempt to lift that veil, which screens from our discernment the arcana of a hidden operation—reminding us somewhat of the hopeless and irrational attempts, in other days, to seize upon and to define the occult qualities of matter. Instead of being satisfied to know of the virtues and properties of the resulting commodity, nothing will appease their spirit of ambitious inquiry, till discovery has been made of the process of the manufacture. Now enough for us to know of the result. For the imaginations of men as to the *modus operandi*, we infinitely prefer the palpable testimonies of Christ and his apostles as to the qualities of the *opus operatum;* and, without prying into the distinctions of Christian, in

every way as fanciful as those of Jewish doctors of old, between one kind of inspiration and another—it is enough for us to learn, that the Bible out and out is perfect, that the Bible is an infallible rule both of faith and manners.

8. Now in regard to the first of these advantages, how does the matter stand? There is a book of special designation, and claiming from the earliest times to stand apart from all human compositions, and that because of the high character which it assumes as the word of God. From the age of miraculous evidence, there has been a distinct and a definite title to mark this book, and signalize it from all others, just as effectually as that appellative the Bible is understood by every peasant in Christendom, to specialize a certain volume which professes to be the word of God, and in this respect to hold an infinite superiority over all the other authorship in the world. But, ὁ βιβλος, the Bible, does not separate this volume more from all other books, than αἱ γραφαι, the writings in the days of the Old Testament, separated a part of that volume, or in the days of the apostles and Christian fathers separated the whole of it from all other writings. This designation was applied κατ' εξοχην to the Jewish Scriptures, by the Hebrews; to both the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures by the disciples of Jesus; and, by general consent and estimation on their part, stood distinguished from all the other writings in the world—as being the product of God's own wisdom and will, instead of being either framed by the wisdom or brought into existence by the

will of man. Under this title thus understood, does our Saviour refer to them; and the sanction given in the New Testament to the Old Testament makes it in fact an easier task, to establish by argument the canonical authority of the whole Jewish scriptures, than that of some of the separate pieces which enter into the scriptures of Christians. Ερευνατε τας γραφας, search the scriptures, saith the Lord to his countrymen—a direction as distinct and unequivocal to them, as search the Bible would be to us. On another occasion He said to the Jews Ου δυναται λυθηναι ἡ γραφη, Scripture cannot be broken—a term comprehensive of all and sundry that now enters into the Old Testament, and by which he homologates every distinct piece that enters into the Old Testament as at present constituted. Πασα γραφη θεοπνευστος, all scripture is the breath and inspiration of God, said the apostle Paul; and this he affirmed to people who had no other understanding of the γραφη, than just the very collection in all its parts from Genesis to Malachi that we have in our Bibles at this day. But we need not multiply quotations on a matter so obvious, as that, in the days of Christ and His apostles, this γραφη or γραφαι formed the appropriate and universally recognised title of a volume, that was held to be the record of God's communications to the world. And then when the volume was augmented by additional communications from Him, and they too were admitted into the volume, the very title remained with it and served as a common designation to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. It

is in one of Peter's epistles, where we receive the first notice of this extension; for there at least some of the epistles of Paul, that is as many as were in existence at the time when Peter wrote, are put on the same footing as the Old Testament—its different parts being still τας λοιπας γραφας, thus placing these productions of Paul on a level with the Old Testament; and referring to them as parts of those writings which *secundum excellentiam* are styled αι γραφαι, or as we should express it—the Bible. This consecrated term then, authorized by our Saviour himself, as the one which distinguishes what we now receive as the Hebrew Scriptures, and extended by his immediate followers to what we now receive as the Christian Scriptures, till at length in the third century restricted to the very collection of pieces which make up our present canon, has, thus sanctioned in the days of highest and purest authority, been made ever since to rest exclusively on the book which in general understanding is the depository of God's communications to the world. This is our first advantage from the testimonies of that particular form which we are now considering. They lead us to extend our respects and give our reliance to the whole volume of scripture.

9. There is a second advantage in this distinct and definite way by which there has been segregated a volume, under a title understood by all, as expressive of its being the word of God, in contradistinction to the word of man; and in this character recognised by Christ and the apostles in reference to the Old Testament—by the apostles

and first Christians in reference to the New. In regard to the former, there is no question that the canon of scripture as received by the Jews in the days of our Saviour, who has given them His express sanction, is identical in all its parts with our present Old Testament; and, in regard to the latter, there is a clear and broad line of division, between the writings which enter into our present New Testament, and all others pretending to a similar authority. Here then on the whole is a volume with a most distinct and declared barrier of separation thrown around it—all that is without, in the way of authorship, being esteemed as the product of human wisdom; all that is within being testified by the workers of miracles and the bearers of undoubted prophecies, to be the product of divine wisdom—to be the scripture which cannot be broken, to be all given by inspiration of God. Thus was the Old Testament isolated and set apart, in this character of high authority, even the authority of heaven, by Jesus Christ and his immediate disciples; and thus also has the New Testament been in like manner signalized—and that just by as great a weight of testimony, as goes to accredit the miracles, and every thing else on which the divinity of our religion is upholden. We have the overbearing tradition of all ecclesiastical antiquity, for the sacred and separate character of a book, now stamped by the designation of the Bible; and if evidence like this is to be set aside, there remains little or no evidence, on which to base even the humblest of those pretensions, that the most meagre of nominal Christians ever

advanced on the side of Christianity. Grant then of this γραφη, a title as restricted, and appropriate, and expressive of the general understanding then, that the book so designated was the word of God as the title scripture is now, and containing at that time all the pieces which enter into our scripture at present; that it held forth to the eyes of the Christian world, and has done so from the earliest ages of our religion, the book of God's revelation to man—what else could in these circumstances be the understanding of men, than that plainly within the limit of this book they held converse with that which emanated from God, whereas without this limit they held converse with but that which emanated from man? This book stood forth to the general sense and understanding of the faithful, peculiarized by this distinction, that it contained the words of God's wisdom—whereas all other books contained but the words of man's wisdom. It served the purpose of a most intelligible and easily recognised limit—when thus made to know, that, within the enclosure of a book thus signalized and singled forth, the ground was holy, and that the language addressed to them there was the language of heaven; whereas, without the enclosure, the ground was common, and its language was the language of earth. In such a state of matters, there could be no mistake and no misplacing of confidence. Men would know distinctly when it was that the words they were reading might be implicitly trusted as the words of God; and when it was that they might be judged or questioned as the words of a fellow

mortal. It was indispensable, we say, for men's guidance, that they should have a distinct and absolute understanding on this subject; and nothing could serve the purpose better than just an isolated book whose visible margin, as it were, separated and marked off that which was of divine inspiration from that which was of human invention or human judgment. But when, instead of this, we are told that the limit does not lie around the book, but meanders in some obscure and untraceable way within it—when taught to believe, as we are by the advocates of a partial inspiration, that man's words as well as God's words are there, and that, to find the line of demarcation between them, we have not as every plain and unsophisticated man wont to imagine, we have not to make a circuit around the four quarters of the Bible, but to make incursion within the fence, and there separate the precious from the comparatively vile —when deprived of the palpable criterion we had formerly, which was simply and surely that this book is the depository of God's revelation, and all its contents are to be honoured and regarded as such, we are sent a rummaging among these contents, as if partly divine and partly human—and, without any such criterion as we had before by which to discriminate between them—we are thrown adrift among the ambiguities of a question where all is loose and indeterminate, and are left at a loss to know what we shall trust as the sayings of God, and what we shall treat as the sayings of a fallible mortal like ourselves. The separation between them was trodden under foot, when the

outer wall of the court was taken down; and by the giving up of a universal inspiration, we are left without a Bible—for we are left to guess as we may when it is or when it is not, that the voice speaketh to us from heaven. It may well be said to emit an uncertain sound, when thus made uncertain of the quarter where the sound comes from; nor can we imagine ought more precarious, than when given to understand, that there is a mixture of various sorts of inspiration in the book, and thus all is reduced to a dim and shadowy question of degrees which is wholly unresolvable. It may continue to be called the Bible. But from the moment we are made to believe that it is not all over the word of God, its character as a clear and unequivocal directory from our Master and Lawgiver in heaven is henceforth nullified. The second advantage then of testimonies in the particular form which we have been considering is, that they lead us to respect the whole Bible equally, or at least to rely on the whole equally.

10. To reassemble these observations into one, or at most two steps of an argument. We have, in the first place, a collection of writings repeatedly adverted to in scripture; and having one or more titles which served to mark them, just as distinctively, as the book of our own faith is at present separated from all other authorship, by its well-known denomination either of the scriptures or the Bible. At one time the appellation is given to them of ἡ γραφη or αἱ γραφαι; at another τα λογια του Θεου, as in the verse where it is said that "unto the Jews were committed the oracles of

God;" at a third time, *τα ἱερα γραμματα*, as when Timothy is said to have known from a child the holy scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation. Under one or other of these titles, it is one of the surest points of ecclesiastical history, that all the books of our present Old Testament were comprehended, and these exclusively, when spoken of as they repeatedly are by our Saviour and His Apostles: And these are the very titles, which, beginning with the Apostles and descending from them with an evidence as copious and sure as that by which the miracles and all the historical foundations of our faith are substantiated, have, by the general consent of Christians, been extended to the pieces which make up our present New Testament—so that whatever is predicated in the Bible of the subjects which are thus designated, may be regarded as the testimony of revelation to the perfections and properties of this volume, or to the degree of authority which belongs to it.

11. Now, confining ourselves to a few of those passages in the New Testament, where the scriptures are referred to under one or other of the denominations that have been now specified. "Jesus said unto them, Ye err, not knowing the scriptures." "Search the scriptures." "Scripture" (this we think the most distinct and unequivocal of all possible testimonies,) "the scripture cannot be broken." This cannot be exceeded; but it is equalled by the following testimony. "The scriptures must be fulfilled." The necessity thus alleged is, in another place, made the reason why our Saviour would submit to any endurance,

rather than that one jot or one tittle of the scriptures should fail—"But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be." "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope"—not some things in scripture, but whatsoever things were written there, were written for our learning. Now some of these testimonies apply expressly to each and every part of scripture—bearing at all times in mind, that this scripture is inclusive, by the testimony of Christ and His Apostles, of all that we now have in the Old Testament, and exclusive of every Jewish writing beside; inclusive also, on the very evidence which accredits Christianity at all, of every book that enters into our present New Testament, and exclusive of every Christian writing beside. Of this scripture, in its totality, it is said that it cannot be broken—which it could, if any part of it, however small, might, as being but of human character and authority, be detached from the rest as being of divine authority: And it is also said that whatsoever things were written there, were written for our learning—making no distinction whatever between the degree of faith and docility due to certain of these things, over certain others of them. And then when further told to search the scriptures, and that scripture must be fulfilled—this injunction and this information, distinct and definite as they are, when understood of a well-known book so denominated and of all within the perimeter thereof, become altogether vague, useless, bewilder-

ing, and in fact convey no injunction that we can act upon, and no information that we can specify—if, on the principle of partial inspiration, the duty of searching, the certainty of fulfilment, apply only to certain parts of this scripture we are told not what, to certain places and passages thereof we are told not where. At this rate, each is left to guess or to find a scripture for himself; and, with all the properties and excellences ascribed to this book, we positively do not know at this rate what the portions are which this description is meant to light upon.

12. But more than this. There are certain other designations, which, though not always appropriated to scripture, yet have at times the utmost likelihood of being expressly and specifically so applied—or, if otherwise, leave the passages in which they occur without meaning, or at least strip them of all their usefulness. Every property, for example, ascribed to the word of the Lord, if not to be understood of scripture and of all scripture, is to us at least of no utility and of no practical significance whatever. Had God never published a Word to the world in which we live, it would have been of no importance to let us know that the "word of the Lord is pure;" and it would just be of as little importance, if, though He may have published such a word, we are left in uncertainty as to what it is. But apply this saying to the scriptures, and we instantly restore effect and importance to it; and believing, as we do, that it is really expressive of scripture, our interpretation of this testimony is, that in the γραφη, the ιερα γραμματα, the τα λογια του Θεου, the Bible in

short, there exists but one ingredient of pure unmixed divinity, utterly separated and free from the contamination of all that is human. Again, "the word of God is a light unto our feet and a lamp unto our paths"—a most momentous piece of information truly, if we are only made to know what the word of God is; and nothing can be more distinct or satisfactory in the way of guidance, than simply to be told that the word of God is the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. But should the affirmation be made, that this applies only to part of these scriptures, and we are left without any test by which to fix and identify that part—then the light wanes back again into darkness; and an extinguisher is put upon the Bible. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"—a most emphatic affirmation of the authority that lies in these words, did we but know what the words are. The doctrine of a universal inspiration leaves no doubt upon the subject—under the doctrine of a partial inspiration, we are left to grope our uncertain way to them. These and hundreds of other testimonies respecting the word of God convey to us an explicit, a special and a most important deliverance—only provided, however, that this word is a recognizable something which one can point to, and hold forth to the distinct observation of men. Grant us inspiration, we mean the inspiration of the whole Bible, and this we can point to: But tell us that there is but the inspiration of a part, leaving it to the fancy or inclination of each man how much or how little this part shall be—and then all these

testimonies to the unchangeableness and the purity and the rightful authority of God's word become a thing of nought. They but present us with the predicates of propositions—leaving us to wander in quest of the subject to which they belong. They are but half sentences, void and meaningless, and just for the want of some specific thing to which we can attach them.

13. The terms "inspiration" and "revelation" have been confounded; but in meaning they are really distinct from each other. A man might be inspired for the purpose of writing a history with selection and undeviating accuracy—yet with all the facts with which he was previously acquainted; and this would be inspiration without revelation. Or a man might be informed by a celestial visitant, of matters known only to celestials, as one of the Apostles by Jesus Christ, and may afterwards, in the natural exercise of memory and composition, commit the doctrines to writing; and this would be revelation without inspiration. The one does not necessarily imply the other. When a superhuman, but yet visible being, as our Saviour in the flesh, tells his disciples what before were unknown things of God and heaven, this is revelation. I would even call it revelation, when an invisible being, as the Holy Spirit, infuses the knowledge of these things into the minds of men. But when under His guidance, and by His suggestion, they are prompted to speak and write of them to others, this is inspiration. It would accord with the taste and theory of some, did we admit a revelation without an inspiration. We might imagine the

whole scheme and articles of a system of doctrine made known by some preternatural agent to a commissioned teacher; and that after this, all preternatural application was withdrawn from him —so that for a right conveyance to the world of what he had been thus told or taught, he is left to the retentive powers of his own memory, and to his own faculty of just and appropriate expression. With the advocates for a higher degree of inspiration, there is the demand for much higher securities than this against fallacy and error. They require a preternatural influence, not at the first deposition alone of the subject-matter of revelation in the mind of its intermediate messengers, but along the whole line as it were of the communication between God and the world—that the matter thus deposited might be kept entire in a mind exempt from all the infirmities of human recollection; and that when discharged upon others, instead of being so in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, it might be couched in the very words suggested by the wisdom of God.

14. It will be perceived by this simple statement, what room there is for manifold diversities of sentiment and understanding upon the subject —some as Dr. Benson conceiving only a first revelation, and then the whole intermediate process of continued memory and ultimate expression, left to the operation of the natural faculties alone— others a bringing of all things afresh into the remembrance, whenever an occasion took place for the disclosure of them—others additionally to this an over-ruling determination, not of the

thoughts alone but of the words employed to convey them, a verbal inspiration as well as an inspiration of ideas—others a total inspiration in the doctrinal of scripture, along with a laxer inspiration or none at all in the historical of scripture—others who make a distinction between the inspiration of suggestion and the inspiration of superintendence, conceiving the former, to be unnecessary, when the ordinary powers of memory and language are sufficient, either to retain all that is certainly known, or to convey all that is clearly apprehended; and the latter, again, to be desirable and safe, as a guarantee against the errors into which unaided humanity might else have fallen.

15. There are some of these theories, which appear to involve an unavailing and unprofitable scrutiny into the mode of inspiration. The important inquiry is the effect of it, as realized on the Bible—the product of this inspiration, of whatever sort or description the inspiration itself may be. And the two most interesting questions connected with this object, seem to be, does the inspiration extend to the language of the Bible as well as to its doctrine and sentiment; and does it extend to the whole Bible or only to parts of it?

16. In regard to the first question we are greatly helped to the solution of it, by the testimonies of the second form. There is a certain special designation that occurs both in scripture, and in the writings of the Christian fathers; and which serves specifically to mark the very collection of writings that we know by evidence, as strong as can be adduced in favour of any historical

point in Christianity, are comprised in our present scriptures of the Old and New Testament. A something designed by the term αἱ γραφαι is the subject of many a predicate in the Bible; and we, knowing precisely what the subject is, are at no loss to understand to what specific things these predicates are applicable. It is of great argumentative importance in this discussion, that these γραφαι should be identified with our present scriptures; for we are thereby given to understand that it is our duty to search these scriptures, that we err by not knowing them, that they cannot be broken, that they must be fulfilled, and that all of them are inspired. These all go to confirm our trust in the very books of our present recognised canon; but on the special question whether the various properties of excellence thus attached to the Bible, are attached only to the ideas, or extend also to the language of the Bible, we would remark that they one and all of them are ascribed, not to the ideas as existing in thought and conception in the minds of the inspired men, but to the ideas as brought forth in writing and substantiated in the products of their inspiration. They are the γραφαι, they are the γραμματα, they are the λογια which have all these virtues and excellencies ascribed to them. It is not of the doctrine as mentally apprehended by the sacred penmen, but it is of the doctrine as manually written by them, that the Bible tells us to search the scripture τας γραφας, that the scripture ἡ γραφη cannot be broken, that all scripture πασα γραφη is inspired, that the holy scriptures ἱερα γραμματα are able to

make us wise unto salvation. It is not we should observe for the νοηματα or the thoughts as deposited in the minds of the prophets and apostles, that our confidence is demanded: It is for the γραμματα or these thoughts as bodied forth in the writings of prophets and apostles. It is not to the doctrine as existing within the inspired men in the form of ideas, that the high ascriptions of infallible and heavenly truth are given, for at this anterior stage it had not yet effloresced into γραφαι or γραμματα or λογια; and these very terms afford demonstration in themselves, that it is not to the ideal scheme, but to the written exposition of it, that we are required to yield our trust and the obedience of our faith. It is not for the doctrine as thought, but for the doctrine as written—not for the doctrine as residing in the silent depository of an apostle's thoughts, but for the doctrine as couched in phraseology and imbodied in an apostle's words—it is for this latter, that, in all the quotations we have offered, the implicit submission of men is so peremptorily challenged. It is not with the doctrine as existing in the mind of the seer or scribe, but it is with the doctrine as existing in the scripture that has been written by him—it is with that we have to do. And it is uniformly to this scripture that we find ascribed the high prerogative of authority over us, of unerring guidance both for the direction of our faith and our instruction in righteousness. It is not with the truth merely excogitated, but with the truth expressed, that we have any concern; not with the truth as seen by our inspired teacher,

but with the truth as by him spoken to us. It is not enough that the Spirit hath made him to see it aright—this is not enough, if He have not also made him to speak it aright. A pure influx into the mind of an apostle is no sufficient guarantee for the instruction of the world, unless there be a pure efflux also; for not the doctrine that has flowed in, but the doctrine that has flowed out, is truly all that we have to do with. Accordingly, it is to the doctrine in efflux, that is to the *word*, that we are bidden yield ourselves. It is the word that is a light unto our feet, and a lamp unto our paths: It is His word that God hath exalted above all his name: It is the word that He hath settled fast in heaven, and given to it a stability surer and more lasting than to the ordinances of nature. We can take no cognizance of the doctrine that is conveyed from heaven to earth, when it has only come the length of excogitation in the mind of an apostle; and it is not till brought the further length of expression, either by speech or by writing, that it comes into contact with us. In short our immediate concern is with, not what apostles conceive inwardly, but what they bring forth outwardly—not with the schemes or the systems which they have been made to apprehend, but with the books which they have written; and had the whole force and effect of this observation been sufficiently pondered, we feel persuaded that the advocates of a mitigated inspiration would not have dissevered, as they have done, the inspiration of sentiment from the inspiration of language.

17. For trace the whole subject-matter of the

Bible downward, from the place it once occupied in the pure and primeval fountain-head of truth in heaven—to the place it now occupies in the book that is presented to human eyes, and is made to circulate as the word of life among the habitations of earth. There can be no doubt that in the place of its original residence, it existed in the purest and most perfect form; but had it abidden there, instead of descending upon our world, to men at least it could have been of no use—to us it would have been of as little consequence as the merest nonentity. But the Son of God came forth with it from the dwelling-place of the Eternal, and brought it to the earth where He sojourned, without, we may stand well assured, without an error and without a flaw; but had He carried it back with Him to heaven, and withdrawn it from the view of mortals when He withdrew Himself from their view—we should have been still unblest by its light or its influence: But, instead of this, He did leave behind Him with chosen disciples the memory of its doctrines and informations; and, what is more, He sent a heavenly messenger from on high who still, we may be sure, deposited the precious treasure without one taint or particle of corruption in the breast of the apostles on the day of Pentecost. All then is pure and faultless hitherto. To this point the subject-matter of the Bible has been carried, without one shade of infirmity or desecration. But it has one stage more to travel, ere it comes to the end of its journey. It has to pass through the mind of these selected prophets and apostles, and

to issue thence in language ere it comes forth in the shape of scripture upon the world. Now it is here that we meet the advocates of a partial or mitigated inspiration, and would make common cause against one and all of them. There is not one theory short by however so little of a thorough and perfect inspiration, there is not one of them but is chargeable with the consequence, that the subject-matter of revelation suffers and is deteriorated in the closing footsteps of its progress; and just before it settles into that ultimate position, where it stands forth to guide and illuminate the world. It existed purely in heaven. It descended purely from heaven to earth. It was deposited purely by the great agent of revelation in the minds of the apostles. But then we are told, that, when but a little way from the final landing-place, then, instead of being carried forward purely to the situation where alone the great purpose of the whole movement was to be fulfilled, then was it abandoned to itself, and then were human infirmities permitted to mingle with it, and to mar its lustre. Strange, that, just when entering on the functions of an authoritative guide and leader to mankind, that then, and not till then, the soil and the feebleness of humanity should be suffered to gather around it. Strange, that, with the inspiration of thoughts, it should make pure ingress into the minds of the apostles; but, wanting the inspiration of words, should not make pure egress to that world, in whose behalf alone and for whose admonition alone, this great movement originated in heaven and terminated in earth.

Strange, more especially strange, in the face of the declaration that not unto themselves but unto us they ministered these things, strange, nevertheless, that this revelation should come in purely to themselves, but to us should come forth impurely—with somewhat, it would appear, with somewhat the taint and the obscuration of human frailty attached to it. If that word of God have not been carried through all obstructions immaculately on to the Bible—if, as existing there, its high and holy characteristics be at all overcast, or the tarnish of slightest corruption adhere to it; then, to man, it is practically the same as if corruptly deposited in the mind of the apostles, as if corruptly transformed by the spirit or the Saviour on its way from heaven, as if corrupted in heaven itself, or as if evil had found its way into the upper sanctuary, and the light that issues from the throne of the Eternal had been shorn of its radiance. It matters not at what point in the progress of this celestial truth to our world, the obscuration has been cast upon it. It comes to us a dim and desecrated thing at the last; and man, instead of holding converse with God's unspotted testimony, has an imperfect, a mutilated Bible put into his hands.

18. There are many who would shudder at the thought, of there not having been a pure influx into the mind of the apostles; but deny, by their theories of inspiration, that there has been a pure efflux thence upon the world. Now in which of the states, we ask, is it, that the revelation of God to man is spoken of in the Bible? Not, we

reply, in that state of the revelation, when it was making influx into the prophetic or apostolic mind—but in that state of it, after it had made effiux thence; after, in fact, it had been imbodied in scripture, and then spoken of as αἱ γραφαι; or been shaped into a word, in which shape it is, that through the whole volume of inspiration, every pure and perfect characteristic is assigned to it. In other words, it is not before the efflux, but after it had passed this ordeal, that we are told it cannot be broken—that it is all given by inspiration of God—that no man must take away from it, and no man must add thereunto. These and many similar things are spoken, not of the truth as it exists ideally in the mind of God, but of the truth as uttered verbally by the mouth of His prophets —or, rather, of their collective word, as expressing and imbodying the truth. These high ascriptions are given, not to the act of inspiration, but to the product of inspiration; and we are taught, by the uniform testimony of scripture, to believe of that product, that it is divine and immaculate and perfect. These things are spoken, not of a word, uttered perhaps in heaven, and which never reached our homes upon earth; but of the word that is nigh unto us, of the word as it came forth in utterance from the mouths of prophets and apostles, or as written by their hands. It is of the word thus brought forth in the Bible, and which men by their wretched hypotheses would make a polluted and precarious thing—it is this which is as silver seven times tried, and which has the impress of the wisdom and will of God upon all its sayings.

19. Such being our views, it is the unavoidable consequence of them, that we should hold the Bible, for all the purposes of a revelation, to be perfect in its language as well as perfect in its doctrine. And for this conclusion, it is not necessary that we should arbitrate between the theories of superintendence and suggestion. The superintendence that would barely intercept the progress of error, we altogether discard—conceiving, that, if this term be applicable to the process of inspiration at all, it must be that efficient superintendence which not only secures that, negatively, there shall be nothing wrong—but which also secures that, affirmatively, there should at all times have emanated from the sacred penmen, the fittest topics, and these couched in the fittest and most appropriate expression. Whether this has been effected partly by superintendence and partly by suggestion, or wholly by suggestion, we care not. We have no inclination and no taste for these distinctions. Our cause is independent of them—nor can we fully participate in the fears of those alarmists who think that our cause is materially injured by them. The important question with us is not the process of the manufacture, but the qualities of the resulting commodity. The former we hold not to be a relevant, and we are not sure that it is a legitimate inquiry. It is on the latter we take our stand; and the superabundant testimonies of scripture on the worth and the perfection and the absolute authority of the word—these form the strong-holds of an argument that goes to establish all which the most rigid advocates for a

total and infallible inspiration ought to desire. Our concern is with the work, and not with the workmanship; nor need we intrude into the mysteries of the hidden operation, if only assured by the explicit testimonies of scripture, that the product of that operation, is, both in substance and expression a perfect directory of faith and practice. We believe that, in the composition of that record, men not only thought as they were inspired, but spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But our argument for the absolute perfection of Holy writ is invulnerably beyond the reach even of those who have attempted to trace with geographical precision the line which separates the miraculous from the natural; and tell us when it was that apostles wrote the word which the Spirit prompted them, and when it was that they wrote the words which the Spirit permitted them. To the result, in our humble apprehension, it positively matters not. Did they speak the words that the Spirit prompted, these words were therefore the best. Did they speak the words which the Spirit permitted, it was because these words were the best. *The optimism of the Bible is alike secured in both these ways;* and the sanction of the Spirit extended, both in respect of sentiments and of sayings, to every clause of it. In either way, they effectively are the words of the Spirit; and God through the Bible is not presenting truths through the medium of others' language; He in effect has made it his own language, and God through the Bible is speaking to us.

20. We are aware that by this language of

concession, we might offend the alarmists on the side of plenary inspiration; but, really and in effect, there is no difference betwixt us. We are perfectly agreed as to the absolute and divine perfection of the word—the optimism of the Bible. We are at one as to the qualities of the *opus operatum;* and, if we differ at all, it regards only the *modus operandi*—and it is just because of our aversion to intrude into things unseen, that we express ourselves so guardedly on the subject. The Bible is divinely perfect; yet in one sense may be regarded as the compound result of the natural and the super-natural—not so natural as to have one tinge of nature's infirmity adhering to it—not so super-natural as wholly to suspend and overbear the laws of man's mental constitution. It is thus that each prophet and historian and apostle of scripture, preserves his own characteristic and complexional variety of style and manner —as much so perhaps as if, instead of writing as inspired, they had been left to write as uninspired men. It were difficult, in these circumstances, to define, how far the miraculous encroached on the ordinary processes of thought and expression. But quite enough surely for us, if we know it to have encroached so far, that the Bible, the resulting Bible, is so good that it could not be made better. We agree with Mr. Carson and others that the Bible is wholly the product of divine authorship—God being the author of the ordinary as well as the miraculous; and it being wholly of His judgment and sovereign determination, to what extent the miraculous should over-

rule the natural, in order to the effect of furnishing the world with a perfect and infallible word. We do not detract, in the least, from the mastery of God's wisdom and God's will, in the composition of the Bible, though we allow that He was pleased to avail Himself of second causes. In as far as second causes were concerned in the production of the Bible, we would not say that God *left* the Bible in any degree to the operation of these causes; but, believing as we do in His incessant agency, we would say that He Himself operated by these causes—insomuch that every word, whether suggested to the mind of the writer miraculously or not, was θεοπνευστος; every word was breathed into him by God. And yet we do not feel alarmed by the expression, that the writers were left to their own varieties of style and expression *—as if it followed on that account, that the Bible was abandoned to the chance of deterioration thereby. If the word was suggested to the writer, it must have been the best word—or if the writer used the very word he would have done though uninspired, or otherwise, was left to his own word, it must have been because it was the best. Between the one and the other, we have still the best possible Bible. This information we distinctly and definitely have in scripture; and this ought to satisfy us—although obliged by our ignorance, to speak uncertainly and indefinitely of the operation within the vail. Enough to know

* The miraculous agency of God did not overbear the natural tendency of the human authors of the New Testament to the use of Hebraisms; and hence their Hellenistic Greek.

that the mind of God, and that too conveyed in the best possible expression, is in every sentence of the Bible. Enough to know that, in virtue of His command over all natural and all supernatural agency, the Bible was all made by God—though unable to assign the limit between the two, or unable to trace the footsteps of God in the making of it.

21. There is diversity of operations, but it is God who worketh all in all; and so much is He all in all throughout the Bible, that not only is every thought as He would have it because His thought, but every word as He would have it because His word. He is the universal agent; yet the whole history of the church bears testimony to His liking, if we may so express it, for the instrumentality of man. He did not send an angel to convert Cornelius; He sent two angels, one to Cornelius and the other to Peter, to arrange a meeting between them—that the words of salvation might be heard from the lips of a fellow-mortal. Even the Bible, of itself and without the enforcements of a human expounder, is not the great instrument of Christianization. It is the Bible in the hands, whether of parents or ministers, set forth in explanation by a living instrument, and urged on the feelings and consciences of men by the energy of a living voice. And God has made use, we know not how far, of this law of human sympathy in the composition of the Bible. In this view, we are not at all startled by the evident copyings of the prophets from each other, or the copyings of the evangelists as alleged

by those who speculate on the origination of the Gospels, or by the quotations as if *memoriter* or from the popular translation of the Old Testament into the New. It detracts not from the inspiration of the Bible, that we can reason on the formation and transmission of it, and draw evidence from these—just as we do in the ordinary questions of criticism, from the phenomena of human compositions. Whatever the steps were by which each passage or each sentence and word has been introduced into the record, they are there by the appointment of that God, who at the same time has told us of the infallibility of that record, and that though heaven and earth must pass away, not one jot or one tittle of it shall fail. The fact of its being within the four corners of the Bible, is in itself proof of its being part and parcel of God's communication to the world. We believe in the total inspiration, not from what we know of the process, but from what we have been told of the product. Not one word could be altered, but for the worse; and, whether by instruments or without them, the whole authorship both in substance and expression is God's.

22. The next question which we shall discuss but shortly, is, whether this inspiration extends to the whole Bible, or only to parts of it. We have already expatiated on the state of fearful precariousness in which the faith of Christians would be placed, if, instead of the limit between the inspired and the uninspired being just the whole circumference of scripture, that limit were conceived to meander obscurely within the surface of the record;

and we were left without one steadfast or palpable criterion by which to discriminate between the things of God and the things of man. We are aware of a general impression on this subject, that inspiration was less needed for scripture history than for scripture doctrine. This, we have already stated, proceeds on a confusion of sentiment, in virtue of not distinguishing between the office of inspiration as an importer and its office as an exporter of truth. In discharge of the former office, inspiration is more required for the truths of doctrine than for the facts of history—these facts, in many instances, being first made known, not by revelation at all; but by common observation, and in the exercise of the natural faculties. But in the latter office, even that of an exporter, inspiration may be more required for narrative than for doctrine; and that, not merely because the manifold details of it are with more difficulty remembered than the leading articles of a system of truth—not merely because the memory requires to be aided in the business of recalling them; but because the judgment more requires to be aided, in the business of selecting them. It is quite a mistake that the historical parts, either of the Old or the New Testament (we mean the writing or the giving of them forth) required less the guidance of inspiration, than the doctrinal or even the prophetical. Not to speak of the errors in the selection, we ask our readers to think, in such a mass and multitude of materials, what an interminable record it would have been, had each of the various historians been abandoned to the impulses of his own

taste and his own fancy. Where would have been that condensed and expressive brevity which is nowhere else to be met with in the whole compass of literature? How else could the record of such a number of centuries have been given at once so briefly and yet so comprehensively? What would have been our security, that, in such an infinite diversity of topics, the most pertinent would have been selected; and those which are best adapted to the purposes of a revelation? That there should be such a keeping between the parts of this vast and varied miscellany—that altogether it should be confined within dimensions so moderate, that, instead of swelling out into an unmanageable size, this record of thousands of years should, though not a meagre chronicle of events but a vivid and interesting narrative abounding throughout in touches of graphic delineation, should, nevertheless, have all been comprised within the limits of a pocket volume—there must have been a management here beyond the wisdom of man, and far more beyond it in the historical, than in the didactic parts of the composition. There must have been one presiding intellect that foresaw all, and over-ruled all—for the random concurrence of such a number of authors could never have terminated in such a unique and wondrous combination—insomuch that it holds more emphatically true of the historical than of the doctrinal in the Old Testament, that "whatever things were written aforetime were written for our admonition, on whom the latter ends of the world have come."

23. This consideration is insisted on with great

strength and judgment by Mr. Haldane, in his pamphlet on Inspiration; and at still greater length, in a way too we think exceedingly striking, by Joseph Cottle in the second volume of a miscellaneous work entitled, "Malvern Hills with Minor Poems and Essays." The following are copious extracts from one of those essays, being an "Argument in favour of Christianity deduced from the size of the Bible." The whole argument which is admirably put is well worthy of perusal. "When an uninspired man undertakes to write an important history, entering often into detail, of incident, description, and delineation, the work necessarily becomes extended. But, when mighty events are recorded; the rise and fall of states; the lives of warriors and kings; the principles that regulated their conduct; the aggressions of neighbouring potentates; with all the results and changes which arose from conquest or subjugation; the boldest reader is appalled at the probable accumulation of pages. If this writer has to describe also his own country and ancestors, under all the impressions of personal and national feeling, the temptation to amplify becomes still more imperative: and to what a magnitude might a work be supposed to extend, which was to comprise the labours not only of two or three such writers, but a long succession of them, through many generations? Now the Bible is this extraordinary book, and it is not only totally dissimilar to all others in its nature and execution, but is equally contradistinguished by the rarely-combined qualities of comprehension and succinctness. The

transactions referred to are grand beyond comparison. The writers related occurrences which excited a supreme interest in their minds. They were personally, as well as relatively, connected with the circumstances recorded. Many of them narrated their own exploits, as well as the exploits referable to anterior ages. The multifarious writers consisted of historians, legislators, biographers, moralists, poets, and prophets. The periods described, present a matchless assemblage of important events; the creation; the fall; the antediluvian corruption of man; the deluge; the confusion of tongues; the origin of all the great monarchies of the earth; the lives of the patriarchs, entering often into the minutest statements; their wonderful escape from famine; the call of a particular people; (springing from the patriarchs, in whom was preserved, amid universal polytheism, the knowledge of the one Living and True God;) their ultimate bondage and miraculous preservation; their wandering, for forty years, through the desert; the giving of the moral and ceremonial law; the establishment of the same people in Canaan, where they were sustained for fifteen hundred years, till the coming of Christ, while all the great dynasties by which they were surrounded, successively crumbled away;—the Babylonish; the Assyrian; the Persian; the Egyptian; and the Grecian. To these events must be added, the expulsion of numerous idolatrous long-established, and powerful nations of Palestine; the reigns of an extensive succession of monarchs, in two different lines, under whom the grandest and most complex

transactions occurred which could pertain to so limited a region, including the destruction of Zion and its magnificent temple; the captivity of a whole people for twenty years; their ultimate redemption, with the rebuilding of their city and the temple of 'their Great King.' At length, in the fulness of time, the Saviour of the world appeared, in whom a thousand predictions all centred. His birth and ancestry are narrated, with many incidental occurrences. His sermons are given; his precepts; his important actions; his miracles, and his prophecies. To this are subjoined his arraignment at the bar of Pilate; an account of the indignities which he endured; his patient sufferings; his death, and his resurrection. To all this are added, the lives and travels of his Apostles; the establishment of the first Christian churches, with a narrative of individual and general persecutions; twenty-one Apostolical epistles; a voyage abounding with striking incidents; and the whole concluding with a series of the sublimest Revelations; yet this diversified mass of materials is concentrated into a compass which a *finger* might suspend, and a *wayfaring man* can read!" "All must feel that a few words added to, or subtracted from, many of the precepts, or parables of our Redeemer, would have jarred, and brought down the whole, comparatively, to a human level; but they stand at present in a sacred investment of language, which, if they (with the other scriptures) were not guarded 'by the plagues which are written in this book,' none would dare to violate. To furnish an additional example of the brevity contained in scrip-

ture, it may be remarked, what an extent of condensed meaning appears in the explanation which Christ gave of his parable of the end of the world; 'He that soweth the good seed, is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them, is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels.' In the attenuated thread of ordinary composition, what space would not have been occupied by this, and many other brief specimens of Biblical narrative." "But to recur, finally, to the 'size of the Bible.' With such strong inducements to expatiate, in the respective writers, had it not been for an *over-ruling Providence*, in restraining their natural dispositions, a hundred folio volumes could scarcely have contained so vast a depository as the *sacred volume*. In this case, for all practical purposes, it must have become nearly a sealed book; independently of the impossibility which would have existed, in a *manuscript age*, of disseminating copies sufficient to guard against the ravages of time, or to allow *three* transcripts to the whole world. This compression must be viewed as one of the most striking of the scripture miracles." "Jesus Christ, instead of preparing this well-digested statement of his actions, doctrines, and miracles, *never wrote one word!* Instead of selecting historians to record his life, from among the learned, and the refined, he chose rather for his coadjutors, and biographers, illiterate fishermen! Instead of providing for the future, and

testifying an earnestness, lest succeeding generations should but imperfectly comprehend his designs, arising from the incompetency of the agents who were to transmit a statement of them to posterity; instead of cautioning those of his followers who might project a history of their Master, for distant ages, to be faithful and to omit no part of those *leading points*, on which the strength of his mission rested, he absolutely gave *no* directions; made *no* provision; and discovered *no* solicitude!"

24. As for those who object to a universal inspiration, because of the alleged insignificance of certain topics in the Bible, we would bid them consider how the divinity stands related to the various parts in the volume of nature. In that volume we meet with interminable variety, from things momentous to things minute and seemingly insignificant—from the mighty orbs of the firmament, to the particles of dust that float in the sunbeam—from organizations the most exquisite, to rude and unshapen masses strewn about in negligent confusion, and that appear subservient to no purposes either of utility or decoration. Yet we should not dissociate a God from even what to our eye is most paltry and worthless, in that vast assemblage of objects which make up His universe. Though we can find no meaning either in the loathsome or in the little of creation, we never once think that His power and His purpose had no concern either in the formation or in the continuance of them. We admit that His creative energy originated all, and that His sustaining providence upholds all—in a word, that every thing

which is, though the least and the humblest of His creatures, was as much bidden by Him into existence, and so is as instinct with divinity, as the noblest and most stupendous of any of His works. It speaks not to the disgrace or degradation, but to the incomprehensible greatness and perfection of the Deity—that there should be room alike for the vast and for the puny, within the circle of His regards—that neither things of loftiest magnificence should be above the reach of His high contemplation, nor things the most minute and microscopical should be beneath His care—that He should comprehend in one wondrous range of providence the extremes of magnitude—and that while presiding over the circuits of immensity, still it is to a pervading energy from Him that we are beholden, for every pile of grass, for every insect which crawls on earth's lowly platform.

25. Such being the character of His works, for ourselves we should not be startled or surprised at finding an analogous character in His word; or, though there should be things of exceeding various import there, from matters that appear to us though falsely of trivial interest, to matters on which there directly and evidently hinge the interests of eternity. We can see no incongruity, but the opposite—in that the God of nature, who has lavished such a profusion of workmanship on the curious tabernacle of man's body, and numbers even the hairs of his head—should be also the God of revelation, though He there manifests a wisdom alike inexplicable, in the minute and manifold directions which He gives for the complicated structure of

the Jewish temple and tabernacle. In like manner, when, on the face of creation, we see an extended desert, unpeopled either by the animal or the vegetable tribes—we will not discredit the Bible, as being the workmanship and the whole workmanship of God, because of its many intervening spaces, that present us with nought but a barren nomenclature,* and have neither narrative nor doctrine to enliven them. All we should require is evidence, that the Bible as a whole is the production of God; and after that, we would never propose to dissever Him from certain parts of that Bible, because of their fancied unimportance in the eyes of man. He is no more to be detached from what might appear to us the insignificancies of the record, than detached from what we might also esteem to be the insignificancies of nature; and if there should occur a meagre chronicle, or some humble incident in the one—we must not forget that in the other, there is many a naked rock not beneath His creative power, many a reptile not beneath His creative skill. We are really no judges of what might be deemed worthy of a God to make, or worthy of a God to reveal. There are inexplicable mysteries both in His world and in His word; and, in as far as we are puzzled to account for the apparent uselessness or mean-

* The nomenclature of scripture is however not barren. It has proved a guide to discovery respecting the history and state of nations; and there is no calculating on the uses, in the way of further discovery and evidence, which its catalogues of names may yet subserve. See the identity of the Ishmaelites and Arabians, demonstrated by the Rev. Charles Forster in his work on Mahommedanism.

ness of certain parts in either, the mysteries are completely analogous. After the evidence in fact, whether of God being the author of nature or the revealer of scripture—we hold all objections grounded on the littleness of the products in the one, or the littleness of the informations in the other, to be irrelevant and presumptuous. In the actual state of the proofs for the Bible being entirely the product of His wisdom, we are as little disposed to regard a single verse as the manufacture of man, because of its unimportance—as to believe that the lowly weed is the offspring of some inferior power, because it wants the loveliness or the grandeur of higher objects in creation.

26. The arguments for inspiration have been charged with the vice of reasoning in a circle. For example, and as one of these arguments, the apostles themselves tell us that they were inspired. To this effect they quote the promise of our Lord, who assured them that He would send the Spirit —one of whose functions it should be to bring all things to their remembrance. Their statement of the promise, deriving all its authority from the fidelity of their remembrance, is to us the proof of their inspiration; but the inspiration was given to secure the accuracy of their remembrance. So that our trusting to their remembrance, when they tell us of their inspiration, is very like a *petitio principii*—because, when confiding in the apostolic statement, we seem to take for granted the inspiration which that statement is brought to prove. But the real soundness and consecutiveness of the argument may, we think, be manifested by the

following illustration.—Suppose I were told by another a hundred different things, all of which it was of importance I should distinctly remember, perhaps for the purpose of giving forth a publication about them—there would certainly be some hazard of my recollection not serving me in so many instances; but suppose further a collection of written notices on the whole subject, placed in some depository that should be open to me when I stood in need of refreshing my memory; and I were told that I should find all requisite aid for the penning of my history there. Though, without this expedient, there was the utmost danger, or rather the utmost certainty, that I would not recollect with unfailing accuracy the hundred things wherewith I had been charged, there would be, along with this, the undoubted security, that I would not forget the one thing of a general reference to the depository, whenever I stood in need of having all the varied informations I ever received, distinctly and in all their minuteness recalled to me. There might be a dead certainty of my being correct in one act of the memory, however impossible that I could be correct in a hundred acts; and that, not merely, because it is easier to remember one thing than a hundred, but because the very great and general importance of this one thing, comprehensive in fact of all the rest, could not fail to find such a lodgment for itself in my recollection, as would give me the moral certainty at all times, that my superior had referred me to the depository, and that in that depository I should find all the aid and information

requisite to qualify me for the undertaking he had put into my hands.

27. Now the parallel is just as close and convincing as possible. The varied incidents of our Saviour's life and sayings as recorded in the four evangelists, all the apostles together could not have borne in their memory alone; but the one promise of a monitor who should bring all these things to their remembrance, not one of them would forget. That the information they wanted was all lodged in the upper depository of heaven, and that it might be fetched down thence by believing prayer in all needful supplies for the various branches of the apostolic office, they could not fail both to recollect and to proceed upon. The several hundred things in all their minuteness, they could not by any possibility have actually remembered of themselves; but as to the one thing, the all important one thing, there was just as little possibility of any one of them being mistaken. We have thus as good evidence of the inspiration of the apostles, as we have of any one memorable and palpable fact recorded in any of the four evangelists. The suggestions of the Spirit too, when bringing things to their remembrance, would, in most instances, be accompanied by a consciousness and an act of concurrence on the part of their own natural memory, that each suggestion was a correct one;* and hence a daily and growing confidence in the fidelity of that monitor, whose office it was to guide them unto all truth.

* See our Natural Theology, Book IV., Chap. i., Art. 3.

28. There is a certain reigning character throughout all the doctrine and all the morality of scripture, wherewith this tenet of a partial or modified inspiration is totally and irreconcileably at variance. Whatever principle it announces, it announces in that absolute and uncompromising way, which admits of no indulgence for the least shade or degree of its opposite. Of this, innumerable instances might be given. "He that sinneth in one point is guilty of all," so as to bring upon him the full weight of an outraged law by one iota of deviation. "He that is unfaithful in the least is unfaithful also in much"—thus disclaiming all toleration for what may be deemed by us to be the slighter iniquities of human conduct. The accursed thing of Achan brought down, in judgment from heaven, discomfiture and dismay on the thousands of Israel. The eating of one solitary because forbidden apple, put forth a world and its outcast species from beyond the pale of God's unfallen creation. "One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled;" and it would come all the nearer to our argument, if law were taken in the bibliographical sense of it, as expressing a portion, or even at times the whole of the scripture. "Whosoever breaketh the least of these commandments shall not enter into heaven." This rigid, this resolute assertion of a principle, to be upheld in all its entireness, and not deviated from by a single hair-breadth, is one great characteristic of the Bible. The whole epistle to the Galatians is founded upon it. There was one solitary rite to which the

apostle would give no quarter, not for an hour, because it trenched, by however so small a fraction, on the doctrine of justification by faith alone. The scripture abounds in specimens of this sort —announcing its principle with all the decision and distinctness of a category; and planting an impassable barrier, or describing a clear and uneffaceable line of demarcation, between that principle and its opposite. There is no shifting, no shuffling between the incompatible terms of an alternative. In the spirit of a prompt and steadfast and exalted consistency, it abhors all amalgamation of things by nature immiscible; and this we understand to have been the spirit, in which Paul affirmed, that salvation is either wholly of works or wholly of grace. It must be of the one altogether or of the other altogether, but not a composition of both. "If by grace it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works then it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work." And we hold that on the question of inspiration, there is the same kind of impregnable rampart, by which to guard from all commixture and commutation, a doctrine intact and inviolable. That venerable record which has come down through a long succession of prophets, and passed the ordeal of Christ and His apostles, and has been handed from one age to another in the unquestioned character all along of being the word of God—it is not a medley of things divine and things human; but is either throughout a fallible composition, or throughout and in all its parts the rescript of the only wise and

true God. All over it has the strength and faithfulness of the divinity, or all over the weakness and fallibility of man. It is the Bible or it is no Bible. We keep by the former term of the alternative. We hold all the ground to be holy, that is within the limits of this venerable record; and that the fence thrown around it admits of no inroad to that which is human, among that which is purely and sacredly and altogether divine. It is guarded, strictly and severely guarded, by the menaces of a jealous God, against the daring footstep of any who shall intrude within its barrier—either on purpose to add, or on purpose to take away. He hath done to scripture what he did to Sinai, when He set bounds about the mount, and did sanctify it—so that should priests or people break through to bring up their words beside the words of the Lord, the Lord would break forth upon them.

29. We may have differed from the advocates of a rigid and universal inspiration, in their notions regarding the *process* of a universal suggestion; but, in asserting out and out the perfection and immaculate purity of the sacred volume, we have not receded behind them by a single hairbreadth. We know that on every great question, the contest between the right and the wrong lies at the place of separation between them—for if the slightest inroad beyond the limit be admitted, it is tantamount to a surrender of the cause. We know that the anti-apocryphalists of the day, have been accused of too fiercely resenting the encroachments that have been attempted, on the canon and in-

spiration of scripture, and that, on the plea of the encroachments being slight ones. We shall say nothing of the resentment; but, however slight those encroachments may have been, they could not be too strenuously or too energetically resisted. The truth is that on every conflict of principle, it is at the line of demarcation that the battle must be fought, and that the battle is terminated. Should the charm and the sacredness be broken, by which the margin of an else inviolable territory is guarded, the whole length and breadth of the sanctuary lie open to spoliation; and unless the assault be repelled at the breach, all the goodliness within may at length be trodden under foot of the invaders. What is true of nations in the gladiatorship of arms, is true of principles in the gladiatorship of argument. Should a hostile army plant one footstep within the landmarks of a kingdom, this is enough to arouse a sensitive and high-minded people in vengeance on the aggressors; and that, though no part of the country is seized upon, but the boundary is passed. And so in the controversy before us. It is the part of Christians to rise like a wall of fire around the integrity and inspiration of scripture; and to hold them as intact and inviolable, as if a rampart were thrown around them, whose foundations are on earth and whose battlements are in heaven. It is this tampering with limits that destroys and defaces everything; and therefore it is precisely when the limit is broken, that the alarm should be sounded. If the battle-cry is to be lifted at all, it should be lifted at the outset; and so on the first mingling, by

however so slight an infusion, of things human with things divine, all the friends of the Bible should join heart and hand, against so foul and fearful a desecration.

CHAPTER III.

On the Internal Evidence as a Criterion for the Canon and Inspiration of Scripture.

1. In arguing for the inspiration of scripture, the right order of proof seems to be the following. There is a collection of sacred writings, acknowledged as such both by Jews and Christians, which, from the days of Christ and His apostles, has been designated by certain titles, appropriated to that collection, and to it exclusively—insomuch that these titles have in them all the force and distinction of a proper name. It is under one or other of its proper names, by which it is individualized and separated from all other writings, that this collection is so often referred to in the New Testament—where the properties of infallibility and inspiration are distinctly and repeatedly awarded to them. This forms the main proof of the inspiration of a certain aggregate or collection of writings—after which, the question of the inspiration of any particular book or writing resolves into the question, whether or not it had a place in this collection, or whether or not at the commencement of the Christian era, it formed part

of the canon of the Old Testament. This last is a question which we might either be prepared with beforehand; or which we might determine afterwards, when our proofs for the inspiration of that general book, termed scripture or scriptures, have been completed. The inspiration of scripture in the gross, rests chiefly on the testimony of Christ and His apostles. The inspiration of particular books or portions now in scripture rests chiefly on the evidence that they belong to the canon, or in other words, that they were also then in scripture; for then they must have been included in the sanction given by the founders of the Christian religion to scripture, and to all scripture. When any particular book is thus sanctioned, and so admitted to speak for itself, there is often a mighty addition given to the evidence for its inspiration, in its own averments now made credible—when it tells, as is frequently done, in a variety of forms and expressions, not that thus saith the human author, but that "thus saith the Lord." Beside then the general question of inspiration, the question of the canon is indispensable, to ascertain what the particular books are, to which the credit of inspiration should be given. The question of inspiration determines the homage which is due to scripture in the general; and the question of the canon determines what the particular books are, to which this homage should be rendered. We must have recourse to the one question, when we want to establish the amount of deference or submission, that we owe to scripture at large. We must have

recourse to the other question, when we want to establish, whether this deference be due to any certain specified book, whether in or out of our present scriptures. The two questions of the inspiration and the canon stand related to each other as do the members of the following syllogism. —All scripture is given by inspiration of God: The book of Proverbs is part of scripture: Therefore the book of Proverbs is given by inspiration of God. It is by rightly determining the general question of the inspiration, that we are enabled to state rightly the major proposition. The minor proposition is determined by the canon.

2. The evidence, then, on which the canonicity of any book in scripture rests, is clearly an external evidence—that is external, if not to the whole Bible, at least to the particular book in question. We derive our information and belief of its place in scripture, from the testimony of others beside its own author,—from the various references which can be found to it whether scriptural or exscriptural—from the authority of ancient catalogues —or, lastly, from the concurrence, both of Jews and Christians, even to this present day, in its favour. Now all these proofs for the canon of the Old Testament are clearly external; and that evidence is still more palpably so by which we establish the canon of the New Testament. When we look to the goodly succession of those testimonies, which have determined the canon of these later scriptures—we find that one and all of them are external; and this character applies to each distinct head of argument given on this subject by

Dr. Paley. Let us exhibit them in order, only extending what he says of the historical to all the books of the New Testament. "1st, The books of the New Testament, are quoted, or alluded to, by a series of Christian writers, beginning with those who were contemporary with the apostles, or who immediately followed them, and proceeding in close and regular succession from their time to the present." "2d, When the scriptures are quoted or alluded to, they are quoted with peculiar respect, as books *sui generis;* as possessing an authority which belonged to no other books, and as conclusive in all questions and controversies amongst Christians." "3d, The scriptures were in very early times collected into a distinct volume." "4th, Our present sacred writings were soon distinguished by appropriate names and titles of respect." "5th, Our scriptures were publicly read and expounded in the religious assemblies of the early Christians." "6th, Commentaries were anciently written upon the scriptures; harmonies formed out of them; different copies carefully collated; and versions made of them into different languages." "7th, Our scriptures were received by ancient Christians of different sects and persuasions, by many heretics as well as catholics, and were usually appealed to by both sides in the controversies which arose in those days." "8th, The four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen epistles of St. Paul, the first epistle of John, and the first of Peter, were received without doubt by those who doubted concerning the other books which are included in our present canon." "9th,

Our historical scriptures were attacked by the early adversaries of Christianity, as containing the accounts upon which the religion was founded." "10th, Formal catalogues of authentic scriptures were published, in all of which our present sacred histories were included, till at length when the information respecting them had spread sufficiently, and their claims were acknowledged throughout the church at large, all our present New Testament scriptures were included also." "11th, These propositions cannot be predicated of any of those books which are commonly called apocryphal books of the New Testament."—The reader will not fail to perceive that each of these considerations forms an external argument, or bears upon it the character of external evidence for the canon of the Old Testament.

3. But many writers, in arguing whether for the canonical rank or the inspiration of particular books, have appealed to internal evidence also. That is, over and above the statement which the author makes of a supernatural communication which he had received from God, they appeal to the scriptural quality of the communication itself. They reason for its being a divine production, from the nature of the product; as if it were competent for man to discern such characters of truth and majesty and sacredness in the work itself, as bespeak the high and heavenly origin from which it has descended. They seem as if shut up unto this conclusion by a sort of felt necessity—as if the common people, who should have a reason also for the hope that is in them,

and are utter strangers to the erudition of the external argument, must have access to the knowledge and belief of the inspiration of each particular book in some other way. And, as it is not any thing without the book which forms their reason; it is imagined, if they have found a reason at all, they must find it in the book. There are several writers on the canon of scripture, who appear to have reduced themselves to this conclusion, by the manner in which they had urged the vital and fundamental importance of a well-grounded belief, in the scriptural authority of every book that we receive as scripture. And as the unlearned are ignorant of the external, there seems no other resource left for them, than that they must be guided and determined, in the homage which they render to the divine authority of any book, by the internal evidence. And accordingly, it has been argued of these pious and unlearned believers, that, in the perusal of scripture, they have the taste and discernment of its inspired quality—in virtue of which, they could make distinction for example, between the Book of Proverbs as the genuine progeny of inspiration, and the Book of Wisdom or the Book of Ecclesiasticus as not so.

4. These writers seem to have involved themselves in a dilemma, or at least to have outrun the convictions of the intelligent in their speculations on this subject. To us it appears palpably incompetent for a reader, either learned or unlearned, to discriminate between all the genuinely scriptural, and all the apocryphal books in this way. But again, it is quite as obvious of the great

majority of Christians, that neither have they sought for satisfaction in the other way, or by the study of the external evidence. Between the one and the other, it remains a question for solution—whether there be any real or rational ground of evidence for the faith of the common people.

5. This question, substantially at least if not in one particular form, was much agitated in the days of the reformation. Papists of course affirmed that the power of determination between canonical and apocryphal scriptures, lay with the Pope or council; and that the people at large had no other way of distinguishing between them, than by the decrees of the church. The champions of protestantism, in opposing such a high pretension of authority over the faith of the people in this question, behoved to find out a principle, on which the people might determine it for themselves. It is obvious, that, if the scriptural authority of any particular book was made exclusively to rest on the testimonies of ancient times, they were only the learned who could be satisfied of this at first hand; and still, as before, the few had to tell the many what books they were to receive as inspired, and what they were to reject. This had the appearance of Popery in another form, inasmuch as the great bulk of the people still believed, or at least acquiesced, in certain books as scriptures, at the dictation of others: And, to exalt the authority of private judgment over all other authority, it seemed necessary to find out some other principle than the historical evidence, on which it might be competent for all to form their own independent

decision. And accordingly, among the Protestant writers of these days, we find it contended that the books of scripture can only manifest themselves as such, by their own internal evidence, or powerful influence upon the heart—or even by the internal testimony of the Spirit to their divinity. It is the language of Whitaker, that "our scriptures are to be acknowledged or received, not because the church has appointed or commanded so, but because they came from God; and that they came from God cannot be certainly known by the church, but from the Holy Ghost." Even Calvin says, "all must allow that there are in the scriptures manifest evidences of God speaking in them. The majesty of God in them will presently appear to every impartial examiner, which will extort our assent: So that they act preposterously who endeavour by any argument to beget a solid credit to the scriptures—the word will never meet with credit in men's minds, till it be sealed by the internal testimony of the Spirit who wrote it." The following extracts by Jones, from certain Protestant confessions, are in the same strain. "These," say the compilers of the Dutch Confession, in 1566, "these we receive as the only sacred and canonical books, not because the church receives them as such, but because the Holy Spirit witnesseth to our consciences that they proceed from God, and themselves testify their authority." The Gallican church declares in their confession—not only that their general faith in scripture depends on the testimony of the Spirit, giving to the mind an internal persuasion of their truth; but that

hereby also they know the canonical from the apocryphal books. In like manner Dr Owen, in his Treatise on the Divine Original of Scripture, says "that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament do abundantly and uncontrollably manifest themselves to be the word of the living God; so that merely on the account of their own proposal to us, in the name and majesty of God as such, without the contribution of help or assistance from tradition, church, or any thing else without themselves, we are obliged, upon the penalty of eternal damnation, to receive them with that subjection of soul, which is due to the word of God. The authority of God shining in them, they afford unto us all the divine evidence of themselves, which God is willing to grant to us, or can be granted to us, or is any way needful for us." —Now, it must be quite obvious, that, if left to this test alone, we could not, by the single virtue of its application, determine on the rightful place in scripture, of all the thirty-nine books in the Old, and twenty-seven books in the New Testament. Let each individual be left to himself in this matter, with but this guidance only, and there could be no security, either that he admitted all that was right into his canon, or kept all that was wrong out of it. Richard Baxter seems to have thought more judiciously on this subject than some of his contemporaries. "For my part," says he, "I confess, I could never boast of any such testimony or light of the Spirit (nor reason neither) which, without human testimony, would have made me believe, that the book of Canticles is canonical

and written by Solomon, and the book of Wisdom apocryphal and written by Philo, &c. Nor could I have known all, or any historical books, such as Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c., to be written by divine inspiration, but by tradition," &c. There is obviously then a confusion of sentiment on this subject, and amongst theologians of highest name —a mixture of truth and error, which error, at the same time, is but truth misapplied, or a right principle carried to extravagance. By a right statement of the order of proof, we think, that the whole of this perplexity might be unravelled; and the question be adjusted in all its parts.

6. A book in scripture might be made the subject of two distinct affirmations—one belonging to the history of the book, the other to its character or properties. It may be said of it, that it has been regarded as scripture from the earliest times —and by those too most competent to judge of its title to a place in the collection. Or it may be said of it, that it has the power of so influencing the heart, and so convincing the judgment, both by its adaptations to human nature and by its harmonies with the general system of revealed truth —that, when these are fully manifested, they evince its authorship to be of God. These propositions are distinct; but they are not incompatible. And each may be tested by a proper and peculiar evidence of its own. The one, if true, is an historical truth; and the way to ascertain it is by an examination of the testimonies of ancient times. The other, if true, is an experimental truth; and to ascertain

it, it must be made the subject of a present and a personal trial. There can be no doubt, that he who has made full application of the first of these ordeals to the book in question, and with a satisfactory result, has a much firmer ground on which to rest its canonicity, than the authority of the church. On the arena of this investigation, the learned among the Protestants have held contest with the learned among the Catholics, and made full proof of their superiority. They have vindicated the high prerogatives of reason; and, appealing to the documents of past ages soundly and critically estimated, they can give a reason for their faith.

7. But the question still remains, can any rational origin be assigned for the faith of the common people?—or, is it by a rational process at all that they have been led to it? When they believe that the book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament, or the Epistle to the Hebrews in the New is the word of God—do they not believe this at the telling of another, of the minister or of the church to which they belong? And at this rate, how can we get quit of authority and of blind assent in matters of religion? Do we not behold it of extensive influence in all denominations—and, whether among Protestants or Catholics, has it not a principal share in upholding the Christianity of the world?

8. There is a principle which we have laboured to unfold in another place;* and its application to our present question, is to us a new demonstra-

* See our Natural Theology, Book I., Chap. ii.

tion of its value. Long before the certainties of a subject have become so manifest as to compel our belief, its likelihoods may from the very first be such as to form a rightful claim upon our attention. To be convinced of the reality of this distinction, we have only to consider the state of mind at the outset of every successful inquiry issuing in full conviction, and the state of mind at the termination of it. Long anterior to the exhibition of those undoubted verities which command our faith, there might be that aspect of verisimilitude which calls for our most serious and respectful examination. Insomuch, that, with but the semblance of truth in any given proposition, with but this chance in its favour and consequent hazard of doing violence to some rightful demand on our faith or obedience by putting it away from us, we might incur the guilt of a moral unfairness by our summary rejection of it; and so the condemnation of our resulting unbelief, not because we refused our assent in opposition to the ultimate proofs but simply because we refused our attention to the incipient probabilities of the subject, might have a clear moral principle to rest upon it.

9. The church tells her people, that the book of Proverbs is an inspired composition. Whatever faith the people may give to this announcement, it is not yet faith upon evidence—nor, in this state, has it all the properties of that faith which is unto salvation. But here lies the difference between the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. The former is satisfied with this blind and unhesitating faith on the part of its members, and seeks

for no other; nay throws a barrier in the way of any other, if not by a prohibition to read the scriptures, at least by the discouragement which it casts on the exercise of private judgment. Now that reading of the sacred volume, which the Catholic church forbids or discountenances, the Protestant church inculcates. If the authority of the one church be employed, in preventing the use of the scriptures, the authority of the other is employed, in enjoining the use of the scriptures. The compliance of the people with this mandate may argue a sort of general faith, but not the saving faith of the Gospel. They may read their Bibles because they are bidden, or they may attend to them because they are bidden; but they do not and cannot, in the full sense of the term, believe in them because they are bidden. The whole effect of the church's authority, is to bring the minds of its people into contact with the subject-matter of Christianity; but, for the proper belief of Christianity, this subject-matter must recommend itself by its own proper evidence; it must manifest its own truth to the consciences of those who are giving earnest heed unto it, and who persevere in this earnestness till the day dawn and the day-star arise in their hearts.

10. The pupillage of a well-ordered country under the influence of an efficient church, is the same, in all the essential steps of it, with the pupillage of a well-ordered family under the control of religious parents. Neither the people of the one, nor the children of the other believe at the dictation of their superiors. This is not a possible thing—nor

is it in the order of the human faculties; but it is quite a possible and a frequent thing, that, in compliance with this dictation, they should make diligent use of their Bibles, and so that their minds shall be in daily converse with the doctrines and informations of the sacred record. To this length then, the natural authority of parents in a family, or the acquired authority of clergymen in the church, might bring the subjects on whom they have respectively to operate—whether they be the children of a household, or the population of a country at large. They may have been conducted to the habit both of going to church, and of reading their Bibles. In virtue of the moral suasion which is brought to bear upon them, their hearts may have been solemnized; and they may have been led to a serious, and respectful, or even reverential entertainment of the topics which are addressed to them. But, for the purpose of carrying their conviction, these topics must recommend themselves. They must give demonstration of their own reality; and this can be done by evidence alone—at length discovered by the inquirer as the fruit of his assiduous perusals, or at length brought home to him by the Spirit in answer to his prayers.

11. Now through the whole of this process, we can perceive nothing but the right and the rational in any of its footsteps; and nothing certainly, which should prevent a most legitimate and well-grounded conviction at the last. Unless there be a glaring evil or absurdity, either in the parental or in the ecclesiastical requisition, there might be the guilt of a moral hardihood—if, either a child

in the one case, or an unlettered peasant in the other, shall bid reckless defiance to it. In their incipient state, it might be their incumbent obligation to read as they are bidden—which, for aught they know, might be their first footstep on that path which leads both to truth and to duty. There is real virtue in the docility, whether of men or children, to those superiors whom providence has set over them; and the obligation, instead of being neutralized by the obvious wrongness of the injunction, may in fact be increased and strengthened by the obvious rightness of it. When bidden, in particular, to read their Bibles—this book might not only have a verity which shall be fully manifested at the last, but a verisimilitude palpable to the eye and impressing the conscience of the observer, even on the first and earliest regards which he casts upon it. It is an example of the moral light preceding the argumentative—of that call on the attention that is justified by the probabilities of a subject, which comes before that demand on the belief that is only justified by the sufficient exhibition of its proofs. We again appeal to those characters of sacredness and morality and truth, which sit on the aspect of the Bible; and, with obviousness enough at least, to challenge our further examination, and most certainly to condemn our summary rejection of it. We cannot blame either the child or the peasant, if, at the outset, either shall refuse to us their faith; but both are most worthy of blame, if they refuse to us that obedience which sets them on the way that leads to faith. In short, the Christian educa-

tion of a country, when conducted in the spirit, and according to the methods of Protestantism, is essentially the same process and having the same footsteps with the Christian education of a family. Both are liable to the same theoretical objection on the principles of Rousseau;* and both admit of the same practical and the same philosophical vindication.

12. Now apply this to our present question. A given book in scripture may be either canonical and inspired, or it may not. If the former, then this inspiration viewed as a fact, may be ascertained historically; or viewed as a property, may be ascertained experimentally. A person unlearned may not attempt the *investigation* competent only to a scholar; but, depending on the authority of his church, proceeding on the integrity of the Bible which is in his hands, and told that all is inspired and all is profitable, he, in the act of devoutly reading the part of the Bible in question, makes the *trial*—a competent thing to every humble and conscientious inquirer. If he be the disciple of a church which admits the Book of Proverbs into its canon and it be right in so doing, he will taste the fruits of its actual inspiration in its moral and spiritual effect upon himself; and this perhaps made so distinct, as to give him the perception of its celestial origin. If he belong to a church which admits the Book of Wisdom into its canon, and it be wrong in so doing, the consequence is that in the reading of it he loses his labour; he is misled into a waste of

* See our Natural Theology.—Book I. Chap. ii. Art. 22.

attention and effort which yields him no fruit unto life everlasting. He may still acquiesce in the telling of his church; but he himself has no personal manifestation of it. But though what is counterfeit in his Bible may be useless or may be hurtful to him, yet what is genuine in his Bible may still have made him wise unto salvation. The one like wood, hay, and stubble, will be found to have been of no profit; the other like gold, silver, and precious stones, may have so rewarded the search and the labour after saving knowledge, that he himself may be saved.

13. These two probations, the historical and the experimental, coincide in their result; yet it is of the utmost importance that, between them, there shall be a right order of precedency. We do not say that the same individual should always attempt both; for, if he be unlearned, he is capable only of one of these methods. It is not for him to attempt first the historical, and then the experimental probation; but, for his practical guidance, it seems indispensable, that others for him should have made the historical, and then that he should try the experimental on those books which they have put into his hands. The experimental probation might verify the actually inspired books; but it never could have discovered them. Had there been no history and no tradition regarding the sixty-six pieces of our present collection; and if, instead of being bound up in one volume and handed down as a collection of Sacred Writings, they had lain scattered throughout the multitudinous authorship of the world—then, if left to no

other test than the quality of these compositions, we never, by means of this criterion alone, could have made our way to them, or found them all out. It makes all the difference in the world, when the search is defined and limited to a certain number of books for the purpose of verification—instead of our being cast abroad on the interminable sea of all authorship; and there left to our own measures, or to steer as we may for the purpose of discovery. The question, Are these inspired books?—is a truly different one from the question, What books are inspired? To satisfy the former question, the moral and experimental probation might be altogether competent—while utterly powerless so to guide the inquirer, as that he shall be able to cull and to select the few writings which are inspired, out of the mighty and numerous host which lie around him. It is by the historical probation that we *discover* the authorship of the Bible and of all its parts—even as at the termination of the middle ages, we discovered the authorship of Homer and Virgil and Cicero. It is by the experimental probation that we *verify* this authorship.

14. In these circumstances we must perceive the importance of a Church, as an institute for the secure and copious transmission of the records of inspiration. Even though in centuries of corruption and darkness, the use of or demand for the scriptures should have so far subsided, as that all the copies of them, which, in better times, might have been found throughout the habitations of the people, had either been destroyed by the hand of

violence, or perished by their own natural decay,—the same causes of extermination did not take full effect in those numerous establishments, which had been raised for the maintenance and accommodation of ecclesiastics, by the piety or the superstition of other times. They were in fact the monks and men of various sacred orders in the Christian church, who performed the same service in behalf of the scriptures, which, under the old dispensation, was done by the priests and Levites of Israel. It is true that they partook in the general lethargy of the period; and very many of them made little or no use of their sacred records—yet it is well that these found an asylum in the bosom of convents; and were suffered to lie, though perhaps to lie unread, in places of keeping, respected even through the days of fiercest barbarism, and where, if not useful, at least they were safe. And we know that light and learning did not undergo a total extinction among the ecclesiastics of Christendom—insomuch that to their numerous transcriptions, we mainly stand indebted, both for those manifold copies of the Bible, and those precious relics of ancient literature, to which the mind of Europe awoke at the commencement of the middle ages. It is thus that the scriptures were piloted across this thick and dreary millennium, and that with hundred-fold greater certainty and abundance, than were the best and most respected classics of Greece and Rome. In other words, at the revival of learning, the learned of the priesthood had a hundred-fold better materials for the determination of their questions, respecting the genuine-

ness and authorship of the sacred writings—than the learned of general society had, for the genuineness and authorship of all other writings. To the Jewish and the Christian churches respectively, were committed the oracles of God: and so adapted were both institutes, even in spite of the numerous corruptions into which they fell, for the safe custody and the sure transmission of them—that, greatly beyond all the other memorials of past ages, have the Old Testament on the one hand and the New Testament on the other, descended on a firmer historic pathway and with a far surer light of historical evidence, by which to identify and recognise them.

15. Now at the commencement of the great disunion which took place in Christendom, when the old Papal hierarchy was rent asunder, and new Churches sprung into existence—the controversy did not begin with the unlearned of the people, but with the learned of the priesthood. And in settling the public articles of their respective establishments, more especially the books which they should receive and submit to as the directory of their faith, they were the facts of history, and the external evidence grounded thereupon, which formed the proper weapons of their warfare—as much so indeed, as prophecy and miracles formed the great means, by which the Jewish and Christian dispensations obtained their first acceptance in the world. And, in determining between genuine and apocryphal scriptures, as between those works of Peter by which though dead he yet speaketh, and the spurious composi-

tions of an impostor, they had to proceed on external evidence, even the evidence of testimony —just as much as the superiority of the living Peter over Simon Magus, was vindicated by the palpable superiority of his miracles, or by an external evidence, even the evidence of the senses. The fathers of Protestantism in the work of reforming theology, had the same sort of evidence to proceed upon, with a hundred times greater amount and certainty thereof, in ascertaining both the written relics and the actual state of primitive Christianity—that the great parents of the revival of learning had, in ascertaining the relics and the state of ancient literature. The same documentary evidence which awoke the mind of Europe to a purer literature, also awoke it to a purer Christianity, and what the discovery of a Bible did to Luther, that great restorer of a better theology, the discovery of a Virgil may perhaps have done to some restorer of a better learning. An impulse no doubt may have been given to each from the subject matter of their respective volumes, from the elevated doctrine of the one, from the noble and graceful poetry of the other; but the proper track of investigation to which it carried them both, in their search, whether after the sacred or the secular compositions of other days, was altogether an historical one. This, more particularly, was the right and proper ground for the founders of the Reformation to travel on—in determining between the genuine and the counterfeit, on the great question which be the oracles of God. In the settlement of this, it was with the manuscripts

and memorials of other times that they had properly to do, which had been preserved from the wreck of ages, and which Providence had put into their hands. The controversy was held in an upper region. The decision, in the first instance was in the hands of the learned; and it was for them, on the foundation too of an historical evidence, to fix the canon of scripture, or to tell the church at large which be the genuine scriptures of the Old and New Testament. They, by means of the historical probation, made discovery of these; and it was left for the people, by means of the experimental probation, to make verification of them. Calvin antedated the matter wrong, when, in his controversy with the learned of the church of Rome in behalf of the scriptures, he made appeal to that internal evidence which is felt and appreciated by the unlearned—at the time when, fighting his adversaries with their own weapons, he should have urged the argument critically and historically. He has charged it as preposterous, to plead this argument distinct from the internal evidence. But we should reverse the proposition, and call it preposterous in this matter, to place the internal before the external evidence.* In the Christianization of individuals, the experimental probation is the only one resorted to, and the only one real-

* Paul cautions the churches against counterfeit epistles as from him; and, to distinguish his own genuine ones from these, he set a particular mark on them. (2 Thess. ii. 2, and iii. 17.) It is a felicitous remark of Jones, "If it be, as Calvin says, preposterous to endeavour by any solid argument to beget a solid credit to the scriptures, distinct from their internal evidence, then it was certainly preposterous in St. Paul to add that mark to his epistles, as an evidence they were his."

ized by the great majority of the household of faith. But in laying the foundations of a Christian church, and in rearing the munitions of its external security—the historical probation must be resorted to. They who "walk about Zion, and go round about her, telling the towers thereof, and marking well her bulwarks," speak to us chiefly of the historical or external evidence that leads to the determination of the scriptures. They again who consider and devise for the interior culture of her vineyard, for the work of her parishes, and the religion of her people, speak to us chiefly of that internal and experimental evidence, that finds development and effect in their afterward reading of the scriptures which have been put into their hands. By this process, the historical probation takes the precedency; the experimental follows it. It is the combination of these which forms the strength and the glory of Protestantism. By the first of them is made the glorious discovery of books, which, seen in the lights of erudition, shine upon us with evidence of a hundredfold greater splendour, than all the other literature and history of ancient times. By the second of them, the books thus presented to the church, when left to do their own proper work on the consciences of men, when their lessons are devoutly studied by the people and pressed home with unction and energy by an efficient clergy from the pulpits—then, in the Christian wisdom and moral superiority of a well-trained peasantry, the glorious discovery is followed up by a still more glorious verification.

16. In some books of scripture, the internal evidence may lie deeper beneath the surface than in others—when a more frequent and thorough digging will be requisite, to obtain discovery of the hidden treasure—the fruit of assiduous perusals, and earnest prayers. At the first and superficial aspect, there seems little or no difference between the Book of Wisdom and the Book of Proverbs—so that it is not at one glance only, that we can perceive the human quality of the one, the divine quality of the other. Yet however little distinguishable at once in respect of their internal, there are no books more distinguished from each other in respect of their external evidence. It is a striking remark of Michaelis that "the canonical authority of no part of the Old Testament is so ratified by the evidence of quotations, as the Book of Proverbs; but it is remarkable that the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, which has so striking an affinity with the Book of Proverbs, is not quoted in a single instance by apostles and evangelists; and the difference between canonical and apocryphal is nowhere so strikingly marked, as in this example."* The right order of procedure then in regard to this book is, that, ascertained to be scripture by the learned, it was given as such by them to the unlearned—many of whom, in the course of their patient and devout reading, would find a mine of sacred truth in the one composition, which they never could have found in the other. And whether or not they have formally recognized

* Marsh's Michaelis, 4th Ed. Vol. I. p. 207, 208.

it from its internal character to be the handiwork of God—the Book of Proverbs has been a fountain of high and heavenly wisdom to the Christian peasant, who, in many instances, has attained to the relish and often to the perception of its sacredness.

17. Had the respective functions and relative places of the external and internal evidence been sufficiently pondered by Dr. Pie Smith,* he would not have fallen into the error that he has committed, when, asserting the non-inspiration of the Song of Solomon—and that too, in the face of the strong external evidence which it possesses in common with all the other scriptures of the Old Testament. It is preposterous to put the internal before the external in this question. If he have ventured too much, who pronounces by internal evidence alone, and in the absence of the external, on the divinity of the Book of Wisdom—he surely adventures too much, and at a still more fearful hazard, who, in the abundance of its external evidence, would pronounce on the humanity of the Song of Solomon. A summary approval in the one case is surely not more premature, than a summary rejection in the other. In neither instance is the heavenly or the earthly parentage sufficiently obvious, in looking merely to the books themselves, to preclude the consideration of the external evidence; or to strip that evidence of its prerogative and rightful power, for the determination of the question. It would bespeak, we think, not only a

* See his exposition, among the very best we have of his scripture evidences for the divinity of Christ.

more pious but a more philosophic docility, to leave that book in undisturbed possession of the place which it now enjoys—where it might minister as in ages heretofore to the saintly and seraphic contemplations of the advanced Christian, who discovers that in this poem a greater than Solomon is here, whose name to him is as ointment poured forth, and who while he luxuriates with spiritual satisfaction over pages that the world has unhallowed, breathes of the ethereal purity of the third heavens as well as their ethereal fervour.

18. There are various analogies, by which the process that actually takes place, and as we have now explained it, for the Christian education of a people, might be both illustrated and vindicated. They do certain things at the telling of others; and, in virtue of so doing, they are made to behold certain truths, not with the eyes of others, but with their own eyes. From between what they take on trust, and what they are made in consequence to see for themselves, a right and rational belief emerges at the last.

19. On the authority of an almanac, all men expect with confidence the next coming eclipse. Whatever might be said of the philosophy of this general expectation, it is universally felt by us, that, not to share in it, would argue, not a soundness, but a perversity of intellect. At all events, the greater part of men look for the predicted event as they have been told; and, in the act of looking to it, they obtain a demonstration of its reality at first hand. As they have heard so they have seen. What the learned could predict by

one medium of proof, they, the unlearned, can now perceive by another medium of proof: and, in like manner, what the learned on the authority of one medium of proof, even the external evidence, pronounce to be scripture and of divine origin—the unlearned, by another medium of proof, might at length believe on the authority of their own observation. When once the manifestations of the internal evidence have taken effect on them, they might say with the Psalmist of old, "as we have heard so have we seen in the city of our God."*

20. There are very many who believe in the facts and objects of Astronomy, yet without any other evidence for them, than the testimony of scholars and scientific men. If told to go to an observatory, and, by means of the instruments there, to view the ring of Saturn or the satellites of Jupiter for themselves—there may be certain hypercritics, of kindred disposition with those who sustain the cause of our modern infidelity, and who might contend that ere they attained a warrantable belief in the reality of these objects, they must attain a scientific acquaintance with the medium of proof through which they are beheld. It might be easily shewn, however, that, without having mastered a single demonstration in optics, one might acquire, and on the very principles which enter into the education of the senses, the same confidence in the intimations of the telescope, that he has in the intimations of the eye. So that he who went to an observatory at the

* Ps. xlviii. 8.

bidding of a friend, discovered for himself what he had previously been told of by others; and he who at the bidding of a parent or a minister, makes a Bible the object of his daily repair and daily exercise, may at length find, that what before was only probable on the likelihood of another's testimony, is now palpable to his own vision.

21. We have long thought that in the education of artists, there is a beautiful and effective illustration of the same process—an actual experience of the most eminent in that department, admitted by many of them as a fact, though we have not yet met with an adequate or philosophical explanation of it in any of their writings. What we advert to is the difficulty, which a young practitioner or student of painting would find, if, placed amid a large and indiscriminate collection of pictures, he was left to discover the works of the best masters for himself; and how much it expedites the formation both of his judgment and his taste, to be told of them beforehand, so as that he might limit his contemplations or his studies, to the specimens of first-rate excellence which have been pointed out to him. The merits which he could not perhaps have discovered through a whole lifetime, he will, in the course of a few weeks, come to discern. He at length shares in the general taste and feeling of the connoisseurs, and that, not at the bidding or on the authority of others, but with a just and well-grounded perception of his own. It is most instructive to mark the respective parts, which the external and internal evidence have in this process; and how, by acting at first at the

bidding or on the testimony of his informers, when they told him which the works were of Raphael and Rubens and Vandyke and Titian—he is landed incalculably sooner than if he had been abandoned to himself, not in a factitious, but in an honest and well-grounded admiration of their respective beauties.* Now all we affirm is, that what has been found experimentally, both to originate and to expedite the solid education of an artist, might originate and expedite too the solid education of a Christian. If the former is better of being told beforehand, what the works are which men of a heaven-born

* See Sir Joshua Reynolds' Discourses, in three volumes—Second Edition. London, 1798. We more particularly refer to his own narrative of his own experience given in p. xiv, &c. in the account of his life prefixed to his works. In his Second Discourse, volume i. p. 38, he gives this advice to young artists —"With respect to the pictures that you are to choose for your models, I could wish that you would take the world's opinion rather than your own. In other words, I would have you choose those of established reputation, rather than follow your own fancy. If you should not admire them at first, you will, by endeavouring to imitate them, find that the world has not been mistaken." In his twelfth discourse, volume ii. p. 95, he observes that, "the habit of contemplating and brooding over the ideas of great geniuses, till you find yourself warmed by the contact, is the true method of forming an artist-like mind; it is impossible, in the presence of those great men, to think or invent in a mean manner; a state of mind is acquired that receives those ideas only which relish of grandeur and simplicity." Harris, the profound and philosophical author of Hermes, goes so far as to recommend, that we should "even feign a relish, till we find a relish come, and feel, that what began in fiction terminates in reality."

If these things (and for ourselves we have no doubt of it) be in the order, and according to the real working of the human faculties—who does not see, that the actual Christian education both of families and nations, in every Protestant land where the scriptures are freely and fully taught, argumented by the learned and read by the unlearned, is of efficacy for the diffusion among all classes of a rational and rightly-grounded faith?

genius have executed—the latter is better of being told in like manner, what the books are which prophets and apostles under the guidance of heavenly inspiration have written. It is by an external evidence, that the knowledge of both sorts of productions is transmitted from generation to generation; but it is by an internal evidence that the disciples of each generation are formed—whether in the schools of art, or in the schools of religion. There is no overbearing of the human faculties, no prostration of mind to authority or to the mandates of an earthly superior—in either of the processes. All that authority does is, not to bid us believe; but to bid us attend and to point out the objects of attention. It is well that, in virtue of so many authentic collections, there is an external evidence by which we are enabled to point out rightly, what may be termed the canonical pictures of other days. And it is in every way as well, that, in virtue of so many Churches in Christendom, each in itself a vast repository of ecclesiastical documents, we have a most abundant external evidence—by which we are enabled to point out rightly the canonical, and to distinguish them from the apocryphal scriptures of other days. It is not, however, by force of the external but of the internal evidence, that the enamoured artist kindles into admiration of the great examples which are set before him.—Neither is it by force of the external but of the internal evidence, that the Christian peasant kindles into admiration, and his heart burns within him when the great examples and lessons of the sacred record are opened to his

view. Neither may have even so much as thought of the historical evidence, for the authenticity of the works studied by the one with the devoutness of an amateur; of the writings studied by the other with the devoutness of a religionist. Both may be genuine and well-founded disciples of their respective schools notwithstanding. And thus it is that our Bible, our well argued and well authenticated Bible, has proved an instrument for the solid education of millions who are strangers to every external argument on which the authenticity of the whole and of all its parts is vindicated. Of the outward credentials for the book they know nothing. They are the contents within the book, to which we stand indebted for all the faith, and that not a superstitious but an enlightened faith, that exists in Christendom. It is to the reading of the Bible that we owe this result—as put into the hands of children by the fathers of families; or circulated, under the auspices of its Church, among the people of a kingdom.

22. Before bringing this subject to a close, we would remark the verisimilitude that sits on the canonical scriptures, and constitutes a *prima facie* distinction between them, and all the other religious compositions of the age and country in which they were written—we mean their freedom from a certain legendary character, and a certain untasteful extravagance, that is more or less to be detected in the Apocrypha; but which we think is most noticeable of all, when we make the transition from the Scriptures of the New Testament to the very earliest of the uncanonical writers on the side

of Christianity. Take for an example the epistle of Clement when he argues, or, at least, tries to illustrate the doctrine of a resurrection from the story of the phœnix. No one but must have felt the utter incongruity of such a passage, if thrust into the middle of any argument whatever in the New Testament, on the subject of the resurrection. Conceive it, for example, subjoined to the xvth chapter of 1st Corinthians, or to the ivth chapter of the second epistle; and what a motley juxtaposition would have been produced by it. And the contrast is not confined to particular passages; for, throughout and in general character, there is an obvious and sustained dissimilarity—a sense and a dignity and an appropriateness in the one; and in the other, save when there is a copious intermixture of scripture quotation, or when the devoted piety breaks forth into an elevation and an earnestness which overshadows all the accompaniments, there is an extravagance and a weakness and a fanciful style both of illustration and argument, which makes us feel that we have got into the hands of very illiterate or very unpractised authors.

23. Now, to understand how this should be, we must consider that Christianity is responsible only for its own proper work on the affections and the principles of those, over whom it hath obtained a practical ascendancy. By means of certain great truths which it impresses on the belief and understanding of man, it exerts an influence upon his heart and upon his history; and the supreme love of God, along with the love of his neighbour,

become the prevailing characteristics of him who before was a selfish and ungodly creature. But while it thus revolutionizes the spiritual part, it may leave the natural economy of the taste and the intellect untouched. Abstracting from the moral change, it may no more alter the complexion of his mind, than it alters the complexion of his face; and just as the person and the features and habitudes of walk or gesture may remain what they were before, so also may the mental peculiarities of his constitution remain unaffected—even after Christianity, with all its subduing power over the will and the conduct, has been grafted upon the inner man.

24. It is a great mistake to imagine, that Christianity, by taking the full possession and power over a number of men, overbears all the complexional varieties of character which formerly obtained between them. If there be any foundation for supposing that there is a reality in national distinctions of character, a thing of which we ourselves have no doubt—then a Christian Irishman is just as distinguishable from a Christian Scotchman, as they were previous to the accession of this ingredient. And what is true of the national, is just as true of many of the natural distinctions between men. Christianity does not obliterate the variety of tastes and temperaments among men. In the New Testament this dramatic variety is exhibited, and a dramatic propriety is observed—so that the zeal of Peter, the argumentative vehemence of Paul, the tenderness of John, all shine forth either in their history or their writ-

ings—insomuch that if the whole earth were brought under a Christian economy, we are not therefore to imagine, that all the phases of humanity would thereby be assimilated into one monotonous uniformity of aspect; or that human society would not be enlivened by as great and as graphic a variety as before.

25. Now what is true of the constitutional differences which nature has established between one man and another, is just as true of the artificial differences which civilization and learning have established between one man or between one age and another. It is thus that in our more polished day, we look back to our ruder, yet not on that account our less religious forefathers; and marvel, both at what we should feel the offensive indecorum of their behaviour, and the offensive crudities of their authorship. A bishop, in the present day, stands in as much need of being put upon his guard against the heart-burnings and the jealousies of evil affection, as in the first ages of Christianity. Only then they carried the matter a little farther out; and so the apostle, in enumerating the incumbent gravities and proprieties of a bishop, had to say among other things that he must be "no striker." The same principle will account for what to us appears a flagrant breach of all decency, which the Corinthians fell into, when assembled at the table of the Lord. And in short, we mistake the matter entirely, we misapprehend the proper fruit and function of Christianity, we are not distinguishing the things which differ—if we expect, that, because the religion of the gospel has taken

powerful hold of the consciences of men in a barbarous age, that therefore all the vestiges of barbarism are forthwith to be obliterated.

26. But our present concern is with the conceits and the crudities and the puerile extravagancies of an untasteful and unlettered age. Now it is no more the proper immediate effect of Christianity to teach men good taste, than it is to teach them good orthography. Every gross violation of morality will of course be abandoned by them; but, should they have occasion to be writers, there may still be the grossest violation of all the proprieties in belles lettres. If childishness and credulity and bad taste were their characteristics before the change, they might still remain their characteristics after it; and, without any imputation either on the worth of their principles, or on their competency as witnesses to the palpable facts that are transacted before their eyes—they might, if not kept in check by a supernatural power, fall into manifold errors both of false argument and of false illustration. Clement's bird of Arabia we hold to be a notable example of this; and when one compares, either with his epistle or with the works of any of the apostolic fathers, the compositions of the fishermen of Galilee; when one recognises the chaste and graceful propriety of the latter—how pertinent throughout, and as predominant in sense as in sacredness—how free of all that is irrelevant or absurd or inconsequential—how unstained by any gratuitous folly or flight of extravagance—and yet how certain, that, if left to themselves, they would, like their immediate successors in the

church, have betrayed the waywardness of unpractised infancy at that work of authorship, in which they were but infants—one cannot but feel that they wrote under some powerful hold which at once guided and restrained them; and that, in the simplicity and purity and orderly keeping of all the parts in that venerable record, we have an internal evidence of as broad a distinction between the canonical and the uncanonical, as either the authority of the church or the innumerable written testimonies of the Christian fathers would serve to establish.

CHAPTER IV.

On the Supreme Authority of Revelation.

1. If the New Testament be a message from God, it behoves us to make an entire and unconditional surrender of our minds, to all the duty and to all the information which it sets before us.

2. There is, perhaps, nothing more thoroughly beyond the cognisance of the human faculties, than the truths of religion, and the ways of that mighty and invisible Being, who is the object of it; and yet nothing, we will venture to say, has been made the subject of more hardy and adventurous speculation. We make no allusion at present to Deists, who reject the authority of the New Testament, because the plan or the dispensation of the Almighty, which is recorded there, is different from

that plan or dispensation which they have chosen to ascribe to Him. We speak of Christians, who profess to admit the authority of this record, but who have tainted the purity of their profession by not acting when they ought upon its exclusive authority; who have mingled their own thoughts, and their own fancy with its informations; who, instead of repairing even in those questions of which revelation should have the entire monopoly, to the principle of "what readest thou?" have abridged the sovereignty of this principle, by appealing to others, which are utterly incompetent, as the reason of the thing, or the standard of orthodoxy; and so have brought down the Bible from the high place which belongs to it, as the only tribunal to which in all matters beyond the cognisance of the human faculties the appeal should be made, or from which the decision should be looked for.

3. But it is not merely among partisans or the advocates of a system, that we meet with this indifference to the authority of what is written. It lies at the bottom of a great deal of that looseness, both in practice and speculation, which we meet with every day in society, and which we often hear expressed in familiar conversation. Whence that list of maxims which are so indolently conceived, but which, at the same time, are so faithfully proceeded upon? "We have all our passions and infirmities; but we have honest hearts, and that will make up for them. Men are not all cast in the same mould. God will not call us to task too rigidly for our foibles; at least this is our

opinion; and God can never be so unmerciful, or so unjust, as bring us to a severe and unforgiving tribunal for the mistakes of the understanding." Now, it is not licentiousness in general, which we are speaking against. It is against that sanction which it appears to derive from the self-formed maxims of him who is guilty of it. It is against the principle, that either an error of doctrine, or an indulgence of passion, is to be exempted from condemnation, because it has an opinion of the mind to give it countenance and authority. What we complain of is, that a man no sooner sets himself forward and says, "This is my sentiment," than he conceives that all culpability is taken away from the error, either of practice or speculation, into which he has fallen. The carelessness with which the opinion has been formed, is of no account in the estimate. It is the mere existence of the opinion, which is pleaded in vindication; and, under the authority of *our maxim*, and *our mode of thinking*, every man conceives himself to have a right to his own way and his own peculiarity.

4. Now this might be all very fair, were there no Bible and no revelation in existence. But it is not fair, that all this looseness, and all this variety, should be still floating in the world, in the face of an authoritative communication from God himself. Had no message come to us from the fountain-head of truth, it were natural enough for every individual mind to betake itself to its own speculation. But a message has come to us, bearing on its forehead every character of authenticity; and is it right now, that the question of our faith, or of our

duty, should be committed to the capricious variations of this man's taste, or of that man's fancy? Our maxim, and our sentiment! God has put an authoritative stop to all this. He has spoken; and the right or the liberty of speculation no longer remains to us. The question now is, not "What thinkest thou?" In the days of Pagan antiquity, no other question could be put; and the wretched delusions and idolatries of that period let us see what kind of answer the human mind is capable of making, when left to its own guidance, and its own authority. But we call ourselves Christians, and profess to receive the Bible as the directory of our faith; and the only question in which we are concerned is, "What is written in the law; how readest thou?"

5. But there is a way of escaping from this conclusion. No man calling himself a Christian, will ever disown, in words, the authority of the Bible. Whatever be counted the genuine interpretation, it must be submitted to. But in the act of coming to this interpretation, it will be observed, there is room for the unwarrantable principles which we are attempting to expose. The business of a scripture critic is to give a fair representation of the sense of all its passages as they exist in the original. Now, this is a process which requires some investigation; and it is during the time that this process is carrying on, that the tendencies and antecedent opinions of the mind are suffered to mislead the inquirer from the true principles of the business in which he is employed. The mind and meaning of the author, who is translated, is purely

a question of language, and should be decided upon no other principles than those of grammar or philology. Now, what we complain of is, that while this principle is recognised and acted upon in every other composition which has come down to us from antiquity, it has been most glaringly departed from in the case of the Bible: That the meaning of its Author, instead of being made singly and entirely a question of grammar, has been made a question of metaphysics, or a question of sentiment: That instead of the argument resorted to being, "such must be the rendering from the structure of the language, and the import and significancy of its phrases," it has been, "such must be the rendering from the analogy of the faith, the reason of the thing, the character of the divine mind, and the wisdom of all His dispensations." And whether this argument be formally insisted upon or not, we have still to complain, that, in reality, it has a most decided influence on the understanding of many a Christian; and in this way, the creed which exists in his mind, instead of being a fair transcript of the New Testament, is the result of a compromise which has been made betwixt its authoritative decisions and the speculations of his own fancy.

6. What is the reason why there is so much more unanimity among critics and grammarians about the sense of any ancient author, than about the sense of the New Testament? Because the one is made purely a question of criticism: The other has been complicated with the uncertain fancies of a daring and presumptuous theology. Could we

only dismiss these fancies, sit down like a schoolboy to his task, and look upon the study of divinity as a mere work of translation, then we would expect the same unanimity among Christians that we meet with among scholars and literati, about the system of Epicurus or philosophy of Aristotle. But here lies the distinction betwixt the two cases. When we make out, by a critical examination of the Greek of Aristotle, that such was his meaning, and such his philosophy, the result carries no authority with it, and our mind retains the congenial liberty of its own speculations. But if we make out, by a critical examination of the Greek of St. Paul, that such is the theology of the New Testament, we are bound to submit to this theology; and our mind must surrender every opinion, however dear to it. It is quite in vain to talk of the mysteriousness of the subject, as being the cause of the want of unanimity among Christians. It may be mysterious, in reference to our former conceptions. It may be mysterious in the utter impossibility of reconciling it with our own assumed fancies, and self-formed principles. It may be mysterious in the difficulty which we feel in comprehending the manner of the doctrine, when we ought to be satisfied with the authoritative revelation which has been made to us of its existence and its truth. But if we could only abandon all our former conceptions, if we felt that our business was to submit to the oracles of God, and that we are not called upon to effect a reconciliation betwixt a revealed doctrine of the Bible, and an assumed or excogitated principle of our own;—then

we are satisfied, that we would find the language of the Testament to have as much clear, and precise, and didactic simplicity, as the language of any sage or philosopher that has come down to us.

7. Could we only get it reduced to a mere question of language, we should look at no distant period for the establishment of a pure and unanimous Christianity in the world. But, no! While the mind and the meaning of any philosopher is collected from his words, and these words tried, as to their import and significancy, upon the appropriate principles of criticism, the mind and the meaning of the Spirit of God is not collected upon the same pure and competent principles of investigation. In order to know the mind of the Spirit, the communications of the Spirit, and the expression of these communications in written language, should be consulted. These are the only data upon which the inquiry should be instituted. But, no! Instead of learning the designs and character of the Almighty from His own mouth, we sit in judgment upon them, and make our conjecture of what they should be, take the precedency of His revelation of what they are. We do him the same injustice that we do to an acquaintance, whose proceedings and whose intentions we venture to pronounce upon, while we refuse him a hearing, or turn away from the letter in which he explains himself. No wonder, then, at the want of unanimity among Christians, so long as the question of "What thinkest thou?" is made the principle of their creed, and, for the safe guidance of criticism, they have committed themselves to the endless

caprices of the human intellect. Let the principle of "What thinkest thou?" be exploded, and that of "What readest thou?" be substituted in its place. Let us take our lesson as the Almighty places it before us; and, instead of being the judge of his conduct, be satisfied with the safer and humbler office of being the interpreter of his language.

8. Now this principle is not exclusively applicable to the learned. The great bulk of Christians have no access to the Bible in its original languages; but they have access to the common translation, and they may be satisfied, by the concurrent testimony of the learned among the different sectaries of this country, that the translation is a good one. We do not confine the principle to critics and translators; we press it upon all. We call upon them not to form their divinity by independent thinking, but to receive it by obedient reading; to take the words as they stand, and submit to the plain English of the scriptures which lie before them. It is the office of a translator to give a faithful representation of the original. Now that this faithful representation has been given, it is our part to peruse it with care, and to take a fair and a faithful impression of it. It is our part to purify our understanding of all its previous conceptions. We must bring a free and unoccupied mind to the exercise. It must not be the pride or the obstinacy of self-formed opinions, or the haughty independence of him who thinks he has reached the manhood of his understanding. We must bring with us the docility of a child, if we

want to gain the kingdom of heaven. It must not be a partial, but an entire and unexcepted obedience. There must be no garbling of that which is entire; no darkening of that which is luminous; no softening down of that which is authoritative or severe. The Bible will allow of no compromise. It professes to be the directory of our faith, and claims a total ascendancy over the souls and the understandings of men. It will enter into no composition with us, or our natural principles. It challenges the whole mind as its due, and it appeals to the truth of heaven for the high authority of its sanctions. "Whosoever addeth to, or taketh from, the words of this book, is accursed," is the absolute language in which it delivers itself. This brings us to its terms. There is no way of escaping after this. We must bring every thought into the captivity of its obedience; and, as closely as ever lawyer stuck to his document or his extract, must we abide by the rule and the doctrine which this authentic memorial of God sets before us.

9. Now we hazard the assertion, that, with a number of professing Christians, there is not this unexcepted submission of the understanding to the authority of the Bible; and that the authority of the Bible is often modified, and in some cases superseded by the authority of other principles. One of these principles is the reason of the thing. We do not know if this principle would be at all felt or appealed to by the earliest Christians. It may perhaps by the disputatious or the philosophizing among converted Jews and Greeks, but not certainly by those of whom Paul said, that

"not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, were called." They turned from dumb idols to serve the living and the true God. There was nothing in their antecedent theology which they could have any respect for: Nothing which they could confront, or bring into competition with the doctrines of the New Testament. In those days, the truth as it is in Jesus came to the mind of its disciples, recommended by its novelty; by its grandeur; by the power and recency of its evidences; and, above all, by its vast and evident superiority over the fooleries of a degrading Paganism. It does not occur to us, that men in these circumstances would ever think of sitting in judgment over the mysteries of that sublime faith which had charmed them into an abandonment of their earlier religion. It rather strikes us, that they would receive them passively; that, like scholars who had all to learn, they would take their lesson as they found it; that the information of their teachers would be enough for them; and that the restless tendency of the human mind to speculation, would for a time find ample enjoyment in the rich and splendid discoveries, which broke like a flood of light upon the world. But we are in different circumstances. To us, these discoveries, rich and splendid as they are, have lost the freshness of novelty. The Sun of righteousness, like the sun in the firmament, has become familiarized to us by possession. In a few ages, the human mind deserted its guidance, and rambled as much as ever in quest of new speculations. It is true, that they took a juster and a loftier flight

since the days of Heathenism. But it was only because they walked in the light of revelation. They borrowed of the New Testament without acknowledgment, and took its beauties and its truths to deck their own wretched fancies and self-constituted systems. In the process of time, the delusion multiplied and extended. Schools were formed, and the ways of the Divinity were as confidently theorized upon, as the processes of chemistry, or the economy of the heavens. Universities were endowed, and Natural Theology took its place in the circle of the sciences. Folios were written, and the respected luminaries of a former age poured their *a priori* and their *a posteriori* demonstrations on the world. Taste, and sentiment, and imagination, grew apace; and every raw untutored principle which poetry could clothe in prettiness, or over which the hand of genius could throw the graces of sensibility and elegance, was erected into a principle of the divine government, and made to preside over the counsels of the Deity. In the mean time, the Bible, which ought to supersede all, was itself superseded. It was quite in vain to say that it was the only authentic record of an actual embassy which God had sent into the world. It was quite in vain to plead its testimonies, its miracles, and the unquestionable fulfilment of its prophecies. These mighty claims must lie over, and be suspended, till we have settled—what? the reasonableness of its doctrines. We must bring the theology of God's ambassador to the bar of our self-formed theology. The Bible, instead of being admitted

as the directory of our faith upon its external evidences, must be tried upon the merits of the work itself; and if our verdict be favourable, it must be brought in, not as a help to our ignorance, but as a corollary to our demonstrations. But is this ever done? Yes! by Dr. Samuel Clarke, and a whole host of followers and admirers. Their first step in the process of theological study is to furnish their minds with the principles of natural theology. Christianity, before its external proofs are looked at or listened to, must be brought under the tribunal of these principles. All the difficulties which attach to the reason of the thing, or the fitness of the doctrines, must be formally discussed, and satisfactorily got over. A voice was heard from heaven, saying of Jesus Christ, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." The men of Galilee saw Him ascend from the dead to the heaven which He now occupies. The men of Galilee gave their testimony; and it is a testimony which stood the fiery trial of persecution in a former age, and of sophistry in this. And yet, instead of hearing Jesus Christ as disciples, they sit in authority over Him as judges. Instead of forming their divinity after the Bible, they try the Bible by their antecedent divinity; and this book, with all its mighty train of evidences, must drivel in their antichambers, till they have pronounced sentence of admission, when they have got its doctrines to agree with their own airy and unsubstantial speculations.

10. We do not condemn the exercise of reason in matters of theology. It is the part of reason

to form its conclusions, when it has data and evidences before it. But it is equally the part of reason to abstain from its conclusions, when these evidences are wanting. Reason can judge of the external evidences for Christianity, because it can discern the merits of human testimony; and it can perceive the truth or the falsehood of such obvious credentials as the performance of a miracle, or the fulfilment of a prophecy, or the marvellous agreement between the subject-matter of revelation, and previously or distinctly known truth. But one of the most useful exercises of reason is, to ascertain its limits, and to keep within them; to abandon the field of conjecture, and to restrain itself within that safe and certain barrier which forms the boundary of human experience. However humiliating we may conceive it, it is this which lies at the bottom of Lord Bacon's philosophy; and it is to this that modern science is indebted for all her solidity, and all her triumphs. Why does philosophy flourish in our days? Because her votaries have learned to abandon their own creative speculations, and to submit to evidence, let her conclusions be as painful and as unpalatable as they will. Now all that we want, is to carry the same lesson and the same principle into theology. Our business is not to guess, but to learn. After we have established Christianity to be an authentic message from God upon those historical and experimental grounds, on which the reason and experience of man entitle him to form his conclusions, nothing remains for us but an unconditional surrender of the mind to the subject of the message. We have

a right to sit in judgment over the credentials of heaven's ambassador; but we have no right to sit in judgment over the information he gives us. We have no right either to refuse or to modify that information, till we have accommodated it to our previous conceptions. It is very true, that if the truths which he delivered lay within the field of human observation, he brings himself under the tribunal of our antecedent knowledge. Were he to tell us that the bodies of the planetary system moved in orbits which are purely circular, we would oppose to him the observations and measurements of astronomy. Were he to tell us, that in winter the sun never shone, and that in summer no cloud ever darkened the brilliancy of his career; we would oppose to him the certain remembrances, both of ourselves and of our whole neighbourhood. Were he to tell us, that we were perfect men, because we were free from passion, and loved our neighbours as ourselves; we would oppose to him the history of our own lives, and the deeply-seated consciousness of our own infirmities. On all these subjects we can confront him. But when he brings truth from a quarter which no human eye ever explored; when he tells us the mind of the Deity, and brings before us the counsels of that invisible Being, whose arm is abroad upon all worlds, and whose views reach to eternity, he is beyond the ken of eye or of telescope, and we must submit to him. We have no more right to sit in judgment over his information, than we have to sit in judgment over the information of any other visitor who lights upon our planet from

some distant and unknown part of the universe, and tells us what worlds roll in those remote tracts which are beyond the limits of our astronomy, and how the Divinity peoples them with His wonders. Any previous conceptions of ours are of no more value than the fooleries of an infant; and should we offer to resist or to modify upon the strength of these conceptions, we would be as unsound and as unphilosophical as ever schoolman was with his categories, or Cartesian with his whirlpools of ether.

11. Let us go back to the first Christians of the Gentile world. They turned from dumb idols to serve the living and the true God. They made a simple and entire transition from a state as bad, if not worse, than that of entire ignorance, to the Christianity of the New Testament. Their previous conceptions, instead of helping them, behoved to be utterly abandoned; nor was there that intermediate step which so many of us think to be necessary, and which we dignify with the name of the rational theology of nature. In those days this rational theology was unheard of; nor have we the slightest reason to believe, that they were ever initiated into its doctrines, before they were looked upon as fit to be taught the peculiarities of the Gospel. They were translated at once from the absurdities of Paganism to that Christianity which has come down to us, in the records of the evangelical history, and the epistles which their teachers addressed to them. They saw the miracles; they acquiesced in them, as satisfying credentials of an inspired teacher; they

took the whole of their religion from his mouth; their faith came by hearing, and hearing by the words of a divine messenger. This was their process, and it ought to be ours. We do not see the miracles, but we see their reality through the medium of that clear and unsuspicious testimony which has been handed down to us. We should admit them as the credentials of an embassy from God. We should take the whole of our religion from the record of this embassy; and, renouncing the idolatry of our own self-formed conceptions, we should repair to that word, which was spoken to them that heard it, and transmitted to us by the instrumentality of written language. The question with them was, What hearest thou? The question with us is, What readest thou? They had their idols, and they turned away from them. We have our fancies; and we contend, that, in the face of an authoritative revelation from heaven, it is as glaring idolatry in us to adhere to them, as it would be were they spread out upon canvass, or chiselled into material form by the hands of a statuary.

12. In the popular religions of antiquity, we see scarcely the vestige of a resemblance to that academical theism which is delivered in our schools, and figures away in the speculations of our moralists. The process of conversion among the first Christians was a very simple one. It consisted of an utter abandonment of their heathenism, and an entire submission to those new truths which came to them through the revelation of the Gospel, and through it only. It was the pure theology of

Christ and of His Apostles. That theology which struts in fancied demonstration from a professor's chair, formed no part of it. They listened as if they had all to learn: we listen as if it was our office to judge, and to give the message of God its due place and subordination among the principles which we had previously established. Now these principles were utterly unknown at the first publication of Christianity. The Galatians, and Corinthians, and Thessalonians, and Philippians, had no conception of them. And yet, will any man say, that either Paul himself, or those who lived under his immediate tuition, had not enough to make them accomplished Christians, or that they fell short of our enlightened selves, in the wisdom which prepares for eternity, because they wanted our rational theology as a stepping-stone to that knowledge which came, in pure and immediate revelation, from the Son of God? The Gospel was enough for them, and it should be enough for us also. Every natural or assumed principle, which offers to abridge its supremacy, or even so much as to share with it in authority and direction, should be instantly discarded. Every opinion in religion should be reduced to the question of, What readest thou? and the Bible be acquiesced in, and submitted to, as the alone directory of our faith, where we can get the whole will of God for the salvation of man.

13. But is not this an enlightened age? and, since the days of the Gospel, has not the wisdom of two thousand years accumulated upon the present generation? Has not science been enriched

by discovery? and is not theology one of the sciences? Are the men of this advanced period to be restrained from the high exercise of their powers? and because the men of a remote and barbarous antiquity lisped and drivelled in the infancy of their acquirements, is that any reason why we should be restricted, like so many school-boys, to the lesson that is set before us? It is all true, that this is a very enlightened age; but on what field has it acquired so flattering a distinction? On the field of experiment. The human mind owes all its progress to the confinement of its efforts within the safe and certain limits of observation, and to the severe restraint which it has imposed upon its speculative tendencies. Go beyond these limits, and the human mind has not advanced a single inch by its own independent exercises. All the philosophy which has been reared by the labour of successive ages, is the philosophy of facts reduced to general laws, or brought under a general description from observed points of resemblance. A proud and a wonderful fabric we do allow; but we throw away the very instrument by which it was built, the moment that we cease to observe, and begin to theorize and excogitate. Tell us a single discovery, which has thrown a particle of light on the details of the divine administration. Tell us a single truth in the whole field of experimental science, which can bring us to the moral government of the Almighty by any other road than His own revelation. Astronomy has taken millions of suns and of systems within its ample domain; but the ways of God to man stand at a

distance as inaccessible as ever; nor has it shed so much as a glimmering over the counsels of that mighty and invisible Being, who sits in high authority over all worlds. The boasted discoveries of modern science are all confined to that field, within which the senses of man can expatiate. The moment we go beyond this field, they cease to be discoveries, and are the mere speculations of the fancy. The discoveries of modern science have, in fact, imparted a new energy to the sentiment in question. They all serve to exalt the Deity, but they do not contribute a single iota to the explanation of His purposes. They make him greater, but they do not make him more comprehensible. He is more shrouded in mystery than ever. It is not Himself whom we see, it is His workmanship; and every new addition to its grandeur or to its variety, which philosophy opens to our contemplation, throws our understanding at a greater distance than before, from the mind and conception of the sublime Architect. Instead of the God of a single world, we now see Him presiding, in all the majesty of His high attributes, over a mighty range of innumerable systems. To our little eye He is wrapt in more awful mysteriousness; and every new glimpse which astronomy gives us of the universe, magnifies, to the apprehension of our mind, that impassable barrier which stands between the counsels of its Sovereign, and those fugitive beings who strut their evanescent hour in the humblest of its mansions. If this invisible being would only break that mysterious silence in which He has wrapt Himself, we feel that a single word

from his mouth would be worth a world of darkling speculations. Every new triumph which the mind of man achieves in the field of discovery, binds us more firmly to our Bible; and by the very proportion in which philosophy multiplies the wonders of God, do we prize that book, on which the evidence of history has stamped the character of His authentic communication.

14. The course of the moon in the heavens has exercised astronomers for a long series of ages; and now that they are able to assign all the irregularities of its period, it may be counted one of the most signal triumphs of the modern philosophy. The question lay within the limits of the field of observation. It was accessible to measurement; and, upon the sure principles of calculation, men of science have brought forward the confident solution of a problem, the most difficult and trying that ever was submitted to the human intellect. But let it never be forgotten, that those very maxims of philosophy which guided them so surely and so triumphantly within the field of observation, also restrained them from stepping beyond it; and though none were more confident than they whenever they had evidence and experiment to enlighten them, yet none were more scrupulous in abstaining to pronounce upon any subject, where evidence and experiment were wanting. Let us suppose that one of their number, flushed with the triumph of success, passed on from the work of calculating the periods of the moon, to theorize upon its chemical constitution. The former question lies within the field of observa-

tion, the other is most thoroughly beyond it; and there is not a man, whose mind is disciplined to the rigour and sobriety of modern science, that would not look upon the theory with the same contempt as if it were the dream of a poet, or the amusement of a schoolboy. We have heard much of the moon, and of the volcanoes which blaze upon its surface. Let us have incontestable evidence that a falling stone proceeds from the eruption of one of these volcanoes, and the chemistry of the moon will receive more illustration from the analysis of that stone, than from all the speculations of all the theorists. It brings the question in part within the limits of observation. It now becomes a fair subject for the exercise of the true philosophy. The eye can now see, and the hand can now handle it; and the information furnished by the laborious drudgery of experimental men, will be received as a truer document, than the theory of any philosopher, however ingenious, or however splendid.

15. At the hazard of being counted fanciful, we bring forward the above as a competent illustration of the principle which we are attempting to establish. We do all homage to modern science, nor do we dispute the loftiness of its pretensions. But we maintain, that however brilliant its career in those tracts of philosophy, where it has the light of observation to conduct it, the philosophy of all that lies without the field of observation is as obscure and inaccessible as ever. We maintain, that to pass from the motions of the moon to an unauthorized speculation upon the chemistry of its

materials, is a presumption disowned by philosophy. We ought to feel, that it would be a still more glaring transgression of all her maxims, to pass from the brightest discovery in her catalogue, to the ways of that mysterious Being, whom no eye hath seen, and whose mind is capacious as infinity. The splendour and the magnitude of what we do know, can never authorize us to pronounce upon what we do not know; nor can we conceive a transition more violent or more unwarrantable, than to pass from the truths of natural science to a speculation on the details of God's administration, or the economy of His moral government. We hear much of revelations from heaven. Let any one of these bear the evidence of an actual communication from God himself; and all the reasonings of all the theologians must vanish, and give place to the substance of this communication. Instead of theorizing upon the nature and properties of that divine light which irradiates the throne of God, and exists at so immeasurable a distance from our faculties, let us point our eyes to that emanation, which has actually come down to us. Instead of theorizing upon the counsels of the divine mind, let us go to that Volume which lighted upon our world nearly two thousand years ago, and which bears the most authentic evidence, that it is the depository of part of these counsels. Let us apply the proper instrument to this examination. Let us never conceive it to be a work of speculation or fancy. It is a pure work of grammatical analysis. It is an unmixed question of language. The commentator who opens this Book with one hand, and carries his system

in the other, has nothing to do with it. We admit of no other instrument than the vocabulary and the lexicon. The man whom we look to is the scripture critic, who can appeal to his authorities for the import and significancy of phrases; and whatever be the strict result of his patient and profound philology, we submit to it. We call upon every enlightened disciple of Lord Bacon to approve the steps of this process, and to acknowledge, that the same habits of philosophising to which science is indebted for all her elevation in these later days, will lead us to cast down all our lofty imaginations, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

16. But something more remains to be done. The mind may have discernment enough to acquiesce in the speculative justness of a principle; but it may not have vigour or consistency enough to put it into execution. Lord Bacon pointed out the method of true philosophising; yet, in practice, he abandoned it, and his own physical investigations may be ranked among the most effectual specimens of that rash and unfounded theorizing, which his own principles have banished from the schools of philosophy. Sir Isaac Newton completed, in his own person, the character of the true philosopher. He not only saw the general principle, but he obeyed it. He both betook himself to the drudgery of observation, and he endured the pain which every mind must suffer in the act of renouncing its old habits of conception. We call upon our readers to have manhood and philosophy enough to make a similar sacrifice. It is

not enough that the Bible be acknowledged as the only authentic source of information respecting the details of that moral economy, which the Supreme Being has instituted for the government of the intelligent beings who occupy this globe. Its authenticity must be something more than acknowledged. It must be felt, and, in act and obedience, submitted to. Let us put them to the test. "Verily I say unto you," says our Saviour, "unless a man shall be born again, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God." "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." "Justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." We need not multiply quotations; but if there be any repugnance to the obvious truths which we have announced to the reader in the language of the Bible, his mind is not yet tutored to the philosophy of the subject. It may be in the way, but the final result is not yet arrived at. It is still a slave to the elegance or the plausibility of its old speculations; and, though it admits the principle, that every previous opinion must give way to the supreme authority of an actual communication from God, it wants consistency and hardihood to carry the principle into accomplishment.

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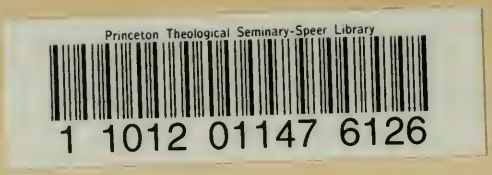
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